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THE IMPACT OF ALTERNATIVELY PREPARED TEACHERS IN MIDDLE GEORGIA:
THE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

by

Jaquel LaFay Johnson

(Under the Direction of Brenda Marina)

Abstract

Alternative teacher preparation programs make both positive and negative contributions in producing classroom teachers. Principals are the key evaluators in determining the teachers' success. Principals are essential evaluators because they serve as the immediate supervisors of the program and help determine the certification process of the alternatively prepared teachers. Teachers are being hired to teach from traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs. This study was essential in determining the impact of the alternative teacher preparation programs in producing needed teachers for the classroom. The study focused on alternatively prepared teachers meeting the shortage areas in Georgia schools. "A teacher shortage means that the number of effective teachers the district wants to employ is greater than the number of effective teachers who are willing and able to work at a given salary (Jacob, 2006, p. 6)." This study revealed the perceptions of principals as related to the performance of the alternatively prepared teacher in regards to content knowledge, classroom management, and carrying out their teaching duties. Content knowledge influences student achievement, but no evidence is present that content knowledge is the only requirement for students' success (Kaplan & Owings, 2002). In fact, classroom management is an essential tool teachers need to ensure optimal levels of learning experiences.

In order to discover the impact alternatively prepared teachers made in the Middle Georgia area, face-to-face interviews were conducted with high school principals. An interview guide was developed based on the information highlighted in the literature. The researcher organized, analyzed, and transcribed the data into emerging themes and patterns to reflect the final results of the research.

Eight high school principals participated in a semi-structured interview. The findings of this research suggest that the Middle Georgia area is not experiencing any shortage of teachers at the time of the study. Although no teacher shortages were evident, through interview data, the principals revealed that more alternatively prepared teachers are teaching in the content areas of mathematics and special education. The strengths noted in this study were the alternatively prepared teachers' content knowledge and life experiences enrich the learning opportunities in the classroom. The weaknesses identified in this study are the lack of classroom management skills and pedagogy skills that were evident during the first semester or the first year of teaching. Implications for future research and practices were also discussed in this study. The results of this study will add to the available research on the principals' perceptions of the benefits and challenges Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program (GA TAPP) teachers' performance in the classrooms at the high school level located in Middle Georgia.

INDEX WORDS: Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program, High School Principals, Qualitative Methodology, Teacher Preparation through an alternative process, and Teacher Shortage

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THE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in Partial
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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

For the unconditional love and many sacrifices you made as a single parent to help me get to this point, I hereby dedicate this dissertation to my mother:

Ms. Fay Garling Sands

For the wisdom, love, and support you gave me, I hereby dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother:

Mrs. Janie Mae Sheddric Garling

Lead not to your own understanding- God gave me this journey and helped me accomplish this goal in my life. Through many storms, grace and mercies- he did not leave me.

Ben, it is your turn now, and I dedicate this dissertation to you- "*Failure is not an Option.*"

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Since the early 80s, there has been a need to reevaluate the structure of teacher preparation programs (Gitomer, Latham, & Ziomek, 1999). As a result, the Bush Administration implemented several reforms. One of the reforms that impacted education was the No Child Left Behind Act 2001 (NCLB). The NCLB Act 2001 mandated “requiring educators in core academic areas to be licensed by the state, hold a bachelor’s degree, and demonstrate competence in their subject teaching area (Dilworth, Aguerrebere, & Keller-Allen, 2006, p. 1).” The objective of this NCLB Act was to improve the quality of teachers by providing flexibility to states to allocate funding to recruit, train, and retain teachers (United States Department of Education, 2004). This reform movement brought attention to the overall structure of teacher preparation programs (Kaplan & Owings, 2002; Dill, 1996; Ingersoll, 2002; Owings, Kaplan, Nunnery et al., 2006). This research study examined the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program (GA TAPP); the benefits and challenges GA TAPP teachers brought to the teaching in profession shortage areas in Middle Georgia; and teacher performance as perceived by principals.

Background of the Study

Teacher shortage is a supply and demand problem. In 2008 when this study began, the demand for teachers exceeds supply (Gitomer et al., 1999). Between 1975 and 1984, the number of college students majoring in teacher education declined from twenty-one percent to nine percent compared to all the majors in college (Stoddart & Floden, 1995). Boyce (2001) states that the number of teachers needed at all grade levels will increase during the next 12 to 15 years due to increasing teacher retirement rates (Ingersoll, 1999; Whiting & Klotz, 2000). According to

the 2006 Georgia Educator Workforce (2006), traditional preparation programs produced only 23.5% of new teachers hired in schools in Georgia.

Alternative Teacher Preparation Program

The alternative teacher preparation program was developed with the intention of meeting the demand in the content areas of math and science and the demographical areas in rural and urban areas (Rubino, Soltys, Wright, & Young, 1994). Nationally, alternative teacher preparation programs represent one-fifth of the new teacher population within the past decade (Gatlin, 2008). The first alternative teacher preparation program was established in 1985 by the New Jersey Department of Education and was called the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program (Lederman, Lederman, & Abd-El-Khalick, 2006; Walsh & Jacobs, 2007). President Bush provided funding to states to replicate the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program model (Rubino et al., 1994). According to the National Center for Education Information and the National Center for Alternative Certification, over 200,000 teachers have received certification through alternative teacher preparation programs (Owings et al., 2006; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2005). In addition, the alternative teacher preparation program was designed to provide previously degreed persons with extensive preparation in chosen content areas.

Alternative Teacher Preparation Program in Georgia

In the early 1980s, states began having problems recruiting teachers in rural and urban geographical areas, in content areas such as math and science, (Gitomer et al., 1999), and in recruiting persons of color (Rubino et al., 1994). The first alternative teacher preparation program created in Georgia was developed in the late 1990s by the Northwest Region Educational Service Agency in Atlanta (United States Department of Education, 2004) and was called the Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Program (ARTCP) (P. Payne, personal

communication, April 17, 2008). In 2001, ARTCP was renamed the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (GA TAPP). At that time, the major change between the programs was the established time frame for completing the program: The GA TAPP program could be completed in two years, whereas, ARTCP did not have set guidelines for the completion of the program. In order to reflect the mission and goals of the alternative teacher preparation program in Georgia, in 2009, Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program was renamed the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program. The program currently reflects a one to three year preparation period depending on the route to certification and the need of the teacher candidate (J. Moore, personal communication, March 10, 2010). At Middle Georgia RESA, the cost of the program is four thousand for the first year and one thousand for each additional year. The cost varies by provider, and the employing school system usually offers financial assistance for the candidate. Some GA TAPP providers offer financial assistance for the teacher candidates (Hendricks, 2010). In order to participate in the alternative preparation program, the teacher candidate must submit an application, transcripts of all college level coursework from the Georgia Professional Standard Commission approved accredited college/university, and documentation of passing the GACE Basic Skills Tests or exemption scores on the Graduate Record Examination, American College Testing, or the Scholastic Aptitude Test and Scholastic Assessment Test or a Master's degree from an accredited college/ university. The teachers are paid the same as teachers with a nonrenewable certificate including any local supplements provided by the employing school district.

Routes to Certification

Different preparation routes for certification are implemented in Georgia and are designed to provide an alternative route towards receiving a professional teaching certificate.

According to the classification system provided by Emily Feistritzer on the National Center for Alternative Certification website, Georgia currently offers six alternative routes to certification. The classification system explains the purpose, the criteria, and the design (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2008; Moran, 2005; Dill, 1996). This system is used to provide consistency in reporting the various types of alternative teacher preparation programs nationally. Class A is “designed for the explicit purpose of attracting talented individuals” to the teaching profession, the central goal of developing alternative teacher preparation programs (Dill, 1996, p. 947). A listing of Georgia’s programs and classifications can be found in Appendix A.

GA TAPP

GA TAPP is a one to three year preparation program that includes job embedded training with supervision and support, pre-service orientation, education classes, and paid employment in a school district (Regional Educational Service Agency, 2003; Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2004; Center of Teaching Quality, 2006). “Georgia TAPP seeks to capitalize on the strengths of adult learners making career transitions into teaching through an alternative teacher preparation program delivery model that is problems-based, and in which essential content and theory are explored in the context of real problems, according to individual teacher-candidates’ needs (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2004, p. 4).” All GA TAPP programs have to be approved by the Professional Standards Commission (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2004). GA TAPP has multiple program completion criteria, and GA TAPP programs lead to a clear renewable certificate in a specific area. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission defines a clear renewable certificate as Georgia’s full professional educator certificate that is valid for five years. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission implemented selection criteria for participants entering the alternative teacher preparation

program to address the issue of producing quality teachers (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2004). Each alternative route to certification requires that the individual have a knowledge base of the content area of certification. In addition, the individual needs to have full-time employment with a school district. An internship with support from a mentor, supervision by the GA TAPP provider, and a portfolio demonstrating the twenty-four GA TAPP teaching competencies are additional completion criterion. To obtain a clear renewable certificate, the teacher in training has to pass standardized assessments, attend professional development classes, have satisfactory observations of their teaching, and be recommended for the clear renewable.

Permitted Personnel

Although most alternative teacher preparation programs lead to clear renewable certification, Permitted Personnel is classified as a route that allows individuals with special qualifications (Teaching Jobs Overseas, 1996) such as Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps (JROTC), performing artists, speakers of a foreign language, retired teachers, and leaders of business organizations an opportunity to teach with a non-renewable certification (Georgia Professional Standards, 2004). In order for the individual to participate in this program, the school district must have a need or the "individual is the best qualified applicant (Georgia Professional Standard Commission, 2004b, p. 1)." The initial permit duration is two years and can be extended for three additional years. A person with a permit (except for JROTC personnel) can receive a clear renewable certificate after completing requirements mandated by the state (Georgia Professional Standard Commission, 2004).

The Test-based Option

The Test-based Option (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007) or One-year Supervised Practicum is one of the alternative routes to certification which was passed in 2004 (Georgia Professional Standard Commission, 2007). The individual receives a five year nonrenewable certificate after meeting program requirements. Eligibility requirements include an undergraduate degree in the related field of certification, passage or exception of the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) Basic Skills test or receive exemption, passage of the GACE Pedagogical test and the GACE content area test. After meeting admission requirements, the individual participates in a one year supervised practicum while employed in a school district (Georgia Professional Standard Commission, 2007).

Program Providers

Georgia Alternative Teacher Preparation Program (GA TAPP) Providers offer various academic training through Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA), Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), and School Districts (Georgia Professional Standards, 2004; Walsh & Jacobs, 2007). Currently, GA TAPP has 20 program providers (Hendricks, 2010). Regional Educational Services is an educational agency established by the Georgia General Assembly in 1986 to provide services to the local school districts in Georgia. Northwest Regional Educational Service Agency was the first RESA to develop an alternative teacher preparation program (United States Department of Education, 2004; Regional Educational Service Agency, 2003). There are sixteen RESAs in Georgia that currently work collaboratively with school districts to provide alternative teacher preparation programs (Georgia RESA Directors Association, 2007). Although RESA is one of the major program providers, GA TAPP is also currently being implemented in some individual school systems as well as Georgia universities and colleges.

Institutions of Higher Education

Nationally, about 80% of the alternative teacher preparation programs are offered in universities or community colleges (Dangel & Guyton, 2005). The Master of Arts in Teaching Programs (MAT) are examples of programs housed in colleges and universities and are usually taught by university and college professors (Kern & Mason, 1998). These programs often resemble traditional preparation programs in the area of coursework requirements (Gatlin, 2008). In Georgia, the GA TAPP and Master of Arts programs are both housed in colleges and universities (P. Pritchard, personal communication, March 31, 2008). The admission requirements to enter alternative preparation programs vary at institutions of higher of education; the GA TAPP program “requires admission into graduate school for candidates pursuing certification through GA TAPP (Hendricks, 2010).” The MAT programs lead to both a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Arts in Teaching (Kern & Mason, 1998). In most cases, “post-baccalaureate programs lead to a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) or a Master of Education (M. Ed.), while others, primarily GA TAPP, are non-degree programs resulting in full teaching certification (Moran, 2005, p. 24).” In the degree program, alternatively prepared teachers participate in a cohort program for five years, receiving both undergraduate and graduate level training (P. Pritchard, personal communication, March 31, 2008; Kern & Mason, 1998). In the MAT program, the teacher in training participates in a one year supervised internship during the fifth year of the program with support from school personnel, mentors and program providers (Kern & Mason, 1998).

The School District

Alternative teacher preparation programs managed by a school district address the individual needs of the candidates and provide training that is tailored to the needs of the district

(Walsh & Jacobs, 2007; Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005). Also, alternative teacher preparation programs provide an opportunity for collaboration between the school district and the preparation programs. This collaboration serves as an important component to the success of new teachers because they receive specific training for the school or type of school in which they will be teaching (Gatlin, 2008). The current school districts offering GA TAPP work in collaboration with Georgia RESAs. The school districts and RESAs can implement the alternative teacher preparation programs and offer certification upon completion of program requirements, but only universities and colleges can grant a degree (T. Hall, personal communication, April 16, 2008).

Benefits of Alternatively Prepared Teachers

Alternatively prepared teachers make up an overwhelming number of teachers certified in the state of Georgia (Gantner, Jenkins, & Layton, 2006). A decline in the number of student teachers produced by traditional preparation programs in both public and private colleges occurred in 1998 (Moran, 2005). Individuals who participate in alternative teacher preparation programs represent a wide range of age groups, ethnic backgrounds, and gender (Owings et al., 2006; Stoddart & Floden, 1995; Jacobson, 2005).

Demographics

A diverse teacher population is another demand that has contributed to the shortage of teachers (Gitomer et al., 1999). Gatlin's (2008) literature review reveals that alternative teacher preparation programs enroll more males, persons of color, and older teacher candidates than the traditional preparation program. Other researchers have also stated that the demographics of individuals who participate in alternative teacher preparation programs are different from those of individuals who participate in traditional preparation programs (Stoddart & Folden, 1995;

Dill, 1996; Wright, 2001). In Georgia, a study on *The Recruitment and Training of Black Professionals* reveals that, in the last five years, less than 20% of males were teaching as a result of the GA TAPP program (Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, Stephens, & Toth, 2004). According to Nweke et.al (2004), GA TAPP was the first program to target recruitment of persons of color teachers. In 2003, 41.8% of the participants in GA TAPP were persons of color and 38.2% were males (Nweke et al., 2004). Alternatively prepared teachers also teach in high demand content areas such as bilingual (Jacob, 2007), special education, mathematics, science, and in geographical areas that are hard to staff (Owings et al., 2006; Jacobson, 2005; Harvey & Gimbert, 2007; Stoddart & Floden, 1995).

Gender

The number of women who enter the teaching profession through traditional preparation programs far exceeds the number of men (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006). A decline in females majoring in teacher education has been evident since the early 1970s (Gordon, Kane & Stagier, 2006); however, 79.3% of novice teachers in Georgia were female (Afolabi, Eads, & Nweke, 2008). Among novice teachers, men leave the profession at a higher rate than women due to other professions offering higher salaries and prestigious positions (Afolabi et al., 2008).

Geographical

The geographical areas that are hard to staff are in both rural and urban areas, where economically disadvantaged students live (Jacob, 2007), and in secondary schools (Moran, 2005). Hall's (2008) literature review also suggests that teachers are in demand in high poverty rural and urban schools. According to Jacob's (2007) research, 13 million school-age children lived in poverty in 2004. The alternative teacher preparation program has helped produce highly qualified teachers in urban and rural areas (Jacob, 2007). More alternatively prepared teachers

are teaching in high poverty area schools because they are given an opportunity to receive training in the hard-to-staff schools (Jacob, 2007; Scarborough, 2007; Moran, 2005).

Traditional versus Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

Wright (2001) states that the benefit of alternative teacher preparation programs is the opportunity given to the participants to learn and implement theories and strategies that are relevant to experiences encountered in their first year of teaching. Making connections in the classroom and applying what is being learned are vital to new teachers and provides support to the students in the classroom (Darling-Hammond et. al., 2005). According to research reviewed by Rubino et al., (1994), alternatively prepared teachers' performance in the classroom, pedagogy knowledge, and competency test scores were similar to or better than traditionally prepared teachers. Although alternatively prepared teachers bring benefits to education, they also present challenges.

Challenges of Alternatively Prepared Teachers

Although the literature reveals benefits of hiring alternatively prepared teachers, opponents have expressed concerns about the preparation and quality of managing classroom responsibilities (Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004). Teachers in alternative teacher preparation programs receive limited pedagogical training (Center for Teaching Quality, 2006). The number of education courses a teacher has during the preparation stage is associated with the quality of instruction in the classroom (Dill, 1996). Scarborough's (2007) study of nine teachers from an urban county in Middle Georgia describes their alternative teacher preparation program as lacking practical experiences and their preparation courses as not conducive to the demographics of the school in which the participants teach. The purpose of Scarborough's study was to identify the need in the areas of administrative support, collegial support and instructional

preparation of first year teachers in Georgia using a qualitative approach. GATAPP teachers had the need of emotional support from their administrators, as do all first year teachers. Also in this study, the beginning teachers felt that they lacked the knowledge for working with diverse learners and for incorporating disciplinary strategies to use in the classroom from the training they received in their preparation program (Scarborough, 2007). These needs of participants identified in Scarborough's (2007) study may pose as a problem when hiring new teachers in the Middle Georgia area.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher shortages in secondary grade levels have been a national concern since early 1980s (Dill, 1996). The need for more teachers in Georgia stems from the federal government institution of a class size reduction funding program in 1999. The class reduction mandate has played a role in creating a demand for more teachers. School enrollment in Georgia is expected to rise 13% from 2000 through 2012 (Moran, 2005). According to current research, enrollment growth over the last ten years has exceeded a quarter-million students (Afolabi et al., 2008). In 2007, Georgia hired 14, 979 new teachers. "Almost half (48.2%) of the newly hired teachers were from Georgia educator preparation institutions and the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Programs (Afolabi et al., 2008, p. 17)."

The research on teacher shortages reveals inconsistent reports; however, the research has contributed to identifying the problem to specific content areas, demographics of the schools, and school locations (Ingersoll, 2002; Boyce, 2001; Guarino et al., 2006; Whiting & Klotz, 2000; Rubino et al., 1994). Moran's study (2005) reveals that the accountability of alternative teacher preparation programs producing more persons of color, males, and teachers who are willing to teach in poverty or urban areas is questionable due to the lack of or insufficient documentation.

However, Mahatha's (2005) literature review reveals that alternatively prepared teachers teach in urban areas.

The literature on the effectiveness of both traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs has also revealed contradictory results and has become a concern of administrators who hire alternatively prepared teachers (Mahatha, 2005; Harvey & Gimbert, 2007; Gantner et al., 2006; Lederman et al., 2006). Mahatha (2005) designed a study to examine public school principals' perceptions of alternatively prepared teachers compared to traditionally prepared teachers in a large urban school district located in New Orleans. The principals' views on content knowledge, management, instructional planning, teachers' roles with stakeholders, and professionalism were obtained from surveys. Teachers who were prepared through the alternative teacher preparation programs were viewed as somewhat less effective in content knowledge, classroom management, instructional planning, and professionalism than their counterparts. Principals who are persons of color ranked the alternatively prepared teachers lower than Caucasian principals in all of the five areas (Mahatha, 2005).

Researchers also emphasize the quality of each program, and how the components of the program are correlated with the teachers' success or lack of success based on knowing the content versus receiving pedagogical training through their preparation programs (Wright, 2001; Flores, Desjean-Perrotta, & Steinmetz, 2004). Teacher quality has been linked to certification, experience, and test scores of both the teacher and the student (Swanson, 2008).

According to researchers, education majors have difficulty obtaining passing scores on tests that are required for entrance into teacher preparation programs or to obtain certification (Boyce, 2001; Gitomer et al., 1999). The test that teachers are required to pass before entering a preparation program usually consists of basic academic skills such as reading, writing, and

mathematics (Boyce, 2001). The test that is required to obtain certification for teaching is based on an individual's knowledge of the area of concentration (Boyce, 2001). The Educational Testing Service (ETS) creates the test questions and passing score criteria. Test questions vary from state to state based on input of each state's department of education representatives (Boyce, 2001). Teacher shortage has also been linked to participants' failing scores on certification tests and to their not being able to obtain adequate certification after completing a traditional preparation program (Whiting & Klotz, 2000).

According to Mahatha (2005), hiring the right teacher candidate is one of the most important roles of a principal. The responsibilities of the principal include providing professional development and learning communities to build the knowledge and skills of teachers as well as hiring candidates that possess the qualities needed to meet the highly qualified definition. Hiring the best candidates should be the first consideration; however, the achievement of students who receive instruction from an alternatively prepared teacher is questionable (Mahatha, 2005).

The research of Guarino et al (2006), suggest that principals do not look at the high academic performance of teachers when considering applicants. During the hiring process, principals consider teacher candidates based on prior work experiences (Guarino et al., 2006). Gantner et al., (2006) from the University of West Georgia conducted a pilot study that reveals evidence that principals in the five school systems located in the Metro Georgia area questioned the adequacy of training the teachers received through the alternative teacher preparation program. The overall study reveals that principals wanted teachers to have an understanding of the content in which they teach (2006). Based on the results from the survey, hiring personnel prefer novice teachers who have skills in teaching the content and a theoretical knowledge of teaching (2006). The survey also reveals that teachers who receive training through the

traditional route are preferred rather than the alternatively prepared teachers (Gantner, et al., 2006). The pilot study did not reveal any alternative teacher preparation program as the most preferred group to hire (Gantner, et al., 2006).

In the research on teacher shortage, the literature suggests that alternative teacher preparation programs were designed to meet the needs of teacher shortage areas (Birkeland & Peske, 2004; Whiting & Klotz, 2000; Koller-Morris, 2002). Alternative teacher preparation programs have received credit for recruiting persons of color and teachers in specific geographical areas as well as providing teachers in specific content areas. Little research is available regarding the extent to which the alternative teacher preparation programs are fulfilling the promise of filling these vacancies effectively. Because of the lack of research available, the researcher will explore the role alternatively prepared teachers through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program have played on meeting the needs of school districts in the Middle Georgia. Through this study, the researcher will explore the challenges and benefits relating to teacher performance as perceived by principals of school districts in Middle Georgia. This information is essential to understanding what contributions alternatively prepared teachers bring to the teaching profession. The main areas that will be addressed regarding alternatively prepared teachers' performance are classroom management, instruction, duties and responsibilities, professionalism, and content knowledge.

Research Questions

The researcher will seek to obtain the understanding with the following overarching question:

How do principals perceive teachers who received certification through the alternative teacher preparation programs as meeting the needs of school districts in Georgia? The overarching question will be answered through the following sub-questions:

1. How do teachers who are prepared through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program meet teacher shortage areas in the Middle Georgia area?
2. How are alternatively prepared teachers performing in meeting their teaching duties?
3. What challenges and benefits are evident in classroom management and instruction of alternatively prepared teachers?
4. How are alternatively prepared teachers equipped with content knowledge to meet the needs of their students?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study may help school administrators, mentors, teacher certification programs and providers, and Department of Certification policymakers understand the perceived strengths and weaknesses of teachers who receive training in alternative teacher preparation programs. School administrators may benefit from the results in this study by gaining an understanding of the needs of the individuals who are alternatively prepared. Professional development opportunities might also be developed that will help individuals transition into the teaching profession. It is the goal of the researcher to use the information gathered in this study as an informative model to assist with developing meaningful training sessions for new teachers. Through the study it is possible that the mentoring program in the state of Georgia can be tailored to address the needed support identified by administrators using the research-based results. By obtaining an understanding of the experiences of principals, the alternative teacher preparation programs and providers will obtain vital information of what changes may be

needed, or what is currently working to contribute to alternatively prepared teachers' success in the classroom.

Overview of Research Procedures

Design

The researcher used qualitative data to understand the benefits and challenges principals experience in hiring and working with teachers who receive training from Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program. Qualitative methodology is an emergent design that consists of the continuation of either broadening or narrowing the research questions after the study has begun (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). The study utilized semi structured interviews to generate data for analysis.

Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used in order to increase the likelihood that the variability of the participants were represented in the study (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). The representative sample consisted of principals from the Middle Georgia RESA area. The Middle Georgia area consists of seven counties. The researcher obtained written consent from the superintendents of the six out of seven school districts. Three counties only have one high school in their district. The other four counties have two or more high schools located in their school district. The researcher elicited volunteers to participate in the study.

Population

The researcher identified the school districts based on using the school districts listed under the Middle Georgia RESA website. Seven school districts were identified as being located in the Middle Georgia School District. The participants were selected from a list of seventeen high schools in the Middle Georgia area obtained from the Georgia Department of Education.

The researcher used purposeful sampling to obtain a representative sample of high school principals in the Middle Georgia area. The list of participants was derived for the Georgia Department of Education website. Selection criteria included (a) high school principals, (b) permission from the district Superintendent, (c) volunteers to participate in the study, and (d) principals who hired teachers who received certification through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy. Career Centers and Alternative Schools were excluded from the study. Career Centers and Alternative Schools have various grade levels represented which may change the results of studying the high school grade level.

Data Collection

The researcher used the literature to guide the development of interview questions (see Appendix B). The researcher asked three principals to review the interview questions for clarity. The three principals were individuals who have knowledge and experience with teachers from the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy. The principals provided feedback to capture the essence of the study. Questions were modified based on the feedback of the principals. The researcher eliminated any leading or misleading questions.

The researcher obtained permission from district superintendents to conduct research and interview principals (see Appendix E). Permission from the Institutional Review Board at Georgia Southern University to complete the study was obtained prior to beginning data collection (see Appendix F). After receiving permission from the IRB committee, the participants were mailed interview solicitation letters (see Appendix G). Each letter included an acknowledgement of agreement to participate in the study. Respondents mailed acceptance letters in a pre-stamped, self-addressed envelope to the researcher. The researcher followed up with respondents who did not respond via telephone and email. After receiving the acceptance

letter from the respondents, the researcher conducted a one-on-one 40 to 55 minute face-to-face interview. The interviews were conducted at the school site of the participant at an agreed upon date and time.

Before each interview, the researcher read and gave the participant a copy of the informed consent form. Each participant was required to sign the consent form that explains confidentiality, voluntary participation, potential benefits, and the use of pseudonym (see Appendix H). The consent form also consisted of acknowledgement of the interviews being audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, and kept with the researcher in a secure location. Taped interviews allowed the researcher the opportunity to record verbatim and obtain accurate responses for the data analysis process. The researcher used another person to aid with the transcription of the interviews. The person who assisted the researcher did not have any identifiable information that will be related to the participant or the school district. Each tape that the transcriptionist transcribed was labeled with the pseudonym.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for this qualitative research consisted of the researcher identifying the topics, forming categories through the use of clustering topics, identifying patterns, making interpretations, and using interpretations to answer research questions (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Charles & Mertler, 2002). The researcher reviewed the transcript to identify key phrases and coded them based on common themes and categories. The results helped the researcher identify the patterns of attitudes, beliefs, and values as they relate to the research questions. Data collection and analysis of data were susceptible to subjectivity (Charles & Mertler, 2002). The researcher put the answers of the participants in narrative form and highlighted key points with the use of quotation marks (Dereshiwsy & Packard, 1992). The findings were reported to give

coherent descriptions of the relationship of the categories or themes identified during data collection (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2005). Categories were modified or new categories or themes were identified based on the new data in comparison to the existing categories. The findings were correlated with the literature as well as the identified categories (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2005). The final analysis explained how conclusions were made and the accuracy of the data being presented (Demerath, 2006). The results of the analysis may be used to make some generalization, but the purpose of the study was to gain an understanding of the participants' views in the study (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001).

Limitations

There are three notable limitations to this study. The study was limited to public schools geographically located in the Middle Georgia area; therefore, generalizations may not be applicable to other areas in Georgia or the United States. The participants' willingness to answer questions about their perceptions of GA TAPP teachers could lack honesty and should be considered a limitation to the study. The participants' geographical location, school climate, and background experiences will most likely influence the responses of the participants. The results of the study may be applicable only to other alternatively prepared teachers.

Delimitation

Delimitation is a limitation that is controlled by the researcher in order to narrow down the study (Creswell, 2002). The participants that will be used in this study are delimited to those found in seventeen Middle Georgia high schools, defined by the Georgia Department of Education, Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), as Middle Georgia RESA area.

Summary

The traditional preparation program has experienced a decline in the number of teacher candidates entering the program because other professions offer higher salaries and prestigious positions. Alternative teacher preparation was developed to increase the number of teachers available for the classroom. Alternatively prepared teachers provide benefits and challenges in the classroom. Benefits that are associated with the alternative teacher preparation program were the recruitment of more males, persons of color, and older teacher candidates to education than traditional preparation programs. The alternatively prepared teachers are willing to teach in high poverty rural and urban schools. The alternative teacher preparation programs also attract teachers in hard to staff content areas such as science, math, special education, and bilingual education. Although benefits have been associated with hiring alternatively prepared teachers, hiring these teachers also presents some challenges, such as not being able to teach students with diverse learning styles, lack of pedagogy training, and classroom management. There is some inconsistency in the literature about the contributions alternatively prepared teachers have made in educating students or education.

Chapter II will present a review of literature and research related to the study. This review of literature will discuss: 1) standards that led to the development of alternative teacher preparation programs; 2) an overview of Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GATAPP); 3) the impact of alternative teacher preparation programs; 4) comparison of traditionally and alternatively prepared teachers; and 5) reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teachers.

Definitions of Terms

For the purpose of this proposed study, the central terms are defined as follows:

Alternative Certification- Dill (1996) defines alternative certification as “a process in which the state licenses a person who has not completed a typical state-approved or equivalent program of studies designed to prepare individuals to teach (p. 954).” Wright (2001) defines alternative teacher preparation program as an accreditation program that allows individuals with content knowledge to obtain certification while having full-time employment in a school district. For the purpose of this study, alternative teacher preparation program will be a preparation program that is tailored for individuals with a bachelor’s degree or higher in an undergraduate program other than education that allows an individual to obtain employment while being prepared for the teaching profession.

Completers- individuals who complete the necessary requirements for teacher certificates in Georgia through the alternative teacher preparation program (Afolabi et al., 2008).

Traditional Certification- Traditional certification is individuals who receive their preparation from a college or university and majored in education.

Teacher Demand- The number of teachers needed based on student enrollments, class-size, teaching workload, and budgetary constraints (Guarino et al., 2006).

Teacher Supply- The number of teachers available to teach at a given grade level and content area.

Reduction in Force Action (RIF) – It is when an agency must abolish a job or layoff (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d.).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter will present research related to the study. This review of literature will discuss: 1) standards that led to the development of alternative teacher preparation programs; 2) an overview of Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GATAPP); 3) the impact of alternative teacher preparation programs; 4) comparison of traditionally and alternatively prepared teachers; and 5) reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teachers.

Background

The available literature related to alternative teacher preparation programs reflects both quantitative and qualitative research methods. When researching this topic, the researcher found that the literature available focuses on comparison of traditional preparation programs and alternative teacher preparation programs. The literature on alternative teacher preparation programs both criticizes and supports this type of preparation program. Several states have some type of alternative teacher preparation program. In order to identify the various types of programs, state contacts, classifications, and numbers of people completing the programs, the National Center for Education Information annually publishes the Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis. The research also reveals the reason for the development of alternative teacher preparation programs. A wealth of literature discusses reasons for the development of alternative teacher preparation programs. One reason for the development of the alternative teacher program is the shortage of teachers. The shortages occurred in the content areas, geographical areas, and the demographics of the teachers in the classroom. The researcher will identify if a shortage area is evident in the Middle Georgia area. To gain an understanding of the topic the researcher used key terms such as alternative teacher preparation

programs, teacher shortage, teacher certification routes, alternatively prepared teachers, Georgia Alternative Teacher Preparation Program, Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy, teacher quality, and preparation routes to teaching.

Introduction

Between 1950 through 1970, Schlecty and Vance conducted research and revealed that an increase in teacher turnover was evident (Dill, 1996). In 1970, another study by Schlecty and Vance concluded that high achieving individuals were no longer interested in the profession of teaching (Dill, 1996). The lack of attraction according to Dill (1996) occurred due to poor work conditions, limited opportunities for career advancement, and other higher paying careers. Currently, research shows conflicting views as to whether the shortage of teachers is a problem in education; however, a consensus in literature on education has clarified that nationally teacher shortage in specific demographic and content areas have occurred (Gitomer et al., 1999). An estimate of 55 million students were enrolled in both public and private elementary and secondary levels during Fall 2004. Student enrollment will increase about 9% between 2004 and 2016. Increases in enrollment are expected in the Midwest, South, and West, and a decrease is expected in the Northeast area of the United States. Georgia has a projected 24.7% increase in student enrollment between the 2004-2016 school years (Hussar & Bailey, 2007). “Teacher demand has two basic components: “Growth” demand, driven by the increase or decrease in student enrollment, and “Replacement” demand, which is determined by teachers leaving for a service or administrative education position, leaving the state for a teaching position elsewhere, or leaving the profession altogether (Afolabi et al., 2008, p. 2).” Subsequently, the supply of teachers influences the demand in geographical or content areas. Nationally, the number of

teachers completing preparation programs has increased in the last four years (Spellings & Manning, 2006).

States have policies designed to outline the standards for licensing teachers. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) consists of state education agencies, higher education institutions, and national educational organizations that provide the performance-based standards for new teachers. Assessments are given to verify that a teacher candidate has displayed the knowledge and skills needed to meet the current licensing standards (Mahatha, 2005). Historically, policies that govern the hiring of teachers and the skills and certification requirements have been influenced by the supply and demand of teachers (Darling- Hammond & Berry, 2001; Roach & Cohen, 2002). The reauthorization of Title II of the Higher Education Act in 1998 required the United States Department of Education (USDE) to issue an annual report recommending the dismantling of traditional preparation programs and the redefinition of teacher qualifications to include little preparation for teaching (Bowen, 2004, p. 47). As a result of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act also known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), more teacher candidates are obtaining their certification through the Alternative Teacher Preparation Program. Section 6613(c) of NCLB allows states to apply for federal grant monies for alternative teacher certification purposes including:

Carrying out programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of teachers and principals, especially in the areas of mathematics and science, for highly qualified individuals with a baccalaureate or master's degree, including mid-career professionals from other occupations, paraprofessionals, former military personnel, and recent college or university graduates with records of academic

distinction who demonstrate the potential to become highly effective teachers or principals (Anderson & Bullock, 2004, p. 1).

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires teachers of core academics by the end of 2005 and 2006 school year to be highly qualified (Kaplan & Owings, 2002; Mahatha, 2005; Jacob, 2006). Highly qualified means that the teachers in academic subjects have demonstrated competency in each subject area in which they teach by meeting a set of standards. Teachers must have 1) a bachelor's degree, 2) a full state certification or licensure, and 3) prove that they know each subject they teach. Teachers who are prepared through alternative teacher preparation programs are considered to be highly qualified through their demonstration of knowing the content which they teach. Not only does being highly qualified make alternative teacher preparation programs attractive to the education sector, but they have contributed to the new era in preparing teachers to teach (Regional Educational Service Agency, 2003).

The Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher shortage and the criticism of the structure of teacher preparation programs are the two key components stated in a most recent study which changed the way teachers are currently being prepared (Bowen, 2004). As enrollment in colleges of education decreased, more states were left to issue emergency certificates to fill the demand of secondary teachers which posed as a problem for student achievement before alternative teacher preparation programs were implemented (Dill, 1996). Explained in previous research of Roth (1986) and Hulling- Austin (1986), alternative teacher preparation programs were developed to provide the rigor that was needed to train teachers, to increase the supply of teachers for the future and to avoid the number of emergency certificates issued (Koller-Morris, 2002). The New Jersey model was the first alternative teacher preparation program beginning in 1985 after the legislation in

1984 (Rubino et al., 1994; Mahatha, 2005; Marshall, 2006). As a result, the alternative teacher preparation program was funded by President Bush to replicate the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program. Alternative teacher preparation programs are attractive because of the time it takes an individual to receive his/her teacher certification (Mahatha, 2005). Alternative teacher preparation programs were also developed to provide more ethnic representation in schools (Koller-Morris, 2002).

Approximately, 110 alternative teacher preparation programs exist nationally (Spellings & Manning, 2006). Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs can be defined in different ways. The length of time it takes a teacher candidate is an identifiable factor that can be used to distinguish between traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs (Dill, 1996). The location of the preparation programs is another variation. The programs can be offered in colleges or universities, school districts, or RESAs. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) recommended that states identify common sets of requirements for the alternative teacher preparation programs. Nationally, the typical requirements for most alternative teacher preparation programs are that the teacher candidate has 1) a Bachelor's degree in the content area in which the teacher candidate is seeking certification 2) a minimum college grade point average and 3) a passing score on standardized content-based tests established by the state. The preparation program often incorporates on-the-job training using mentors. Each alternative teacher preparation program also has required educational courses mainly focusing on working with students with disabilities, cultural diverse students, pedagogical skills, and classroom management techniques. The timeframe for completing the preparation programs is shorter than the traditional preparation programs, and the teachers are being paid while working towards their certification (Branugard-Galayda, 2009).

The Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy

In order to attract more qualified individuals into Georgia's critical shortage areas "the Georgia Quality Based Education (QBE) Act developed an alternative route to certification (Noble, 2008, p. 38)." Another reason for the development of Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program was the request from human resource directors to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC), the organization that oversees teacher certification, "to develop additional pathways to certification that would enable them to hire applicants who could demonstrate content knowledge (Gantner et al., 2006, p. 2)." Between 2002 and 2008, Middle Georgia RESA has enrolled 576 teacher candidates (Hendricks, 2010).

It is important to note that the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program name has been changed to the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy. The name was changed on May 15, 2009 (J. Moore, personal communication, March 10, 2010). The word alternative was changed because it gave many people the idea that people who participate in the program are not real teachers. The word preparation was chosen because the individual is being prepared to transition from one career into the career of teaching. The word pedagogy was chosen because the individuals are receiving pedagogical skills they need for their careers (J. Moore, personal communication, March 10, 2010).

Georgia has eligibility requirements for admission into the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GA TAPP). The individual must have a bachelor's degree in an area other than education with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher in his or her undergraduate studies from an approved accredited college or university. The individual has to pass the Georgia Assessment for the Certification of Educators (GACE) Basic Skills test, or meet the exemption requirements based on previous scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College

Testing (ACT), or the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). If the GA TAPP candidate has a master's degree or higher, the GA TAPP candidate is exempt from the GACE Basic Skills Assessment (Hendricks, 2010). The GACE Basic Skills Assessment is a series of basic skills tests in mathematics, reading, and writing (Jacob, 2006). Knowledge of the content is another criterion for admission and a passing score on the content area of the GACE is required before having clear renewable certification in the content area. A criminal background check and a job offer from a local school district are other requirements. The GA TAPP candidate has to be enrolled or have already taken the Essential for Effective Teaching course through Middle Georgia RESA. Alternative teacher preparation program requirements vary from state to state (Mahatha, 2005).

Between 2001 and 2009, the time period focused on by this study, GA TAPP required a two year preparation phase. During the first year, the teacher candidate received training based on the Charlotte Danielson's Enhancing Student Achievement: A Framework for Teaching (see Appendix I) and teacher-candidates' identified problems and interests were addressed through six seminars. The teacher candidate also completed courses on the integration of technology; identifying and teaching students with special needs, and reading and writing strategies. At the end of the first year, the teacher candidate took the GACE Content Assessment. At the end of the first year, the teacher candidate received recommendation from the principal for continuation or denial of Intern Certificate for the second year.

During the second year of internship and induction, the teacher candidates continued classes that focused on the Danielson's Framework for Teaching and the teacher candidates' identified problems and interests. Throughout the preparation program, the teacher candidate keeps an achievement portfolio, and receives evaluations from support team members (Regional

Educational Service Agency, 2003). The portfolio consists of the documentation of the teacher candidates' skills and abilities in the following:

- Planning appropriate units of study with detailed lesson plans that include the use of differentiation techniques, integrated technology, and balanced assessments.
- Developing and maintaining an appropriate classroom environment including the use of wide variety of instructional, assessments, and management strategies as documented in observations.
- Participating in school/system based professional learning.
- Contributing to the school/district beyond their teaching requirements
- Maintaining contact with their students' families
- Maintaining appropriate records
- Reflecting on their own teaching, as well as teaching observed during fieldwork at the home school and other schools
- Meeting the duties and responsibilities required by the school/system.
- Demonstrating appropriate disposition. (Hendricks, 2010, p. 57).

A support team was available throughout the preparation program; the support team consists of a mentor, a representative from Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA), and a principal.

An Intern Certificate is issued for a two year period and is requested by the employing school district. The school district can request an additional year for the GA TAPP teacher. After meeting the requirements of GA TAPP and passing the content assessments, the teacher candidate obtained a Clear Renewable Certificate (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2004). The Conceptual Framework for the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy is located in Appendix J.

Impact of Alternative Preparation Programs

Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs have impacted the teaching work force in a variety of ways. In the past, states issued emergency licenses to individuals to fill the vacancies in schools (Gitomer et al., 1999; Chen, 2003). This action caused states to diminish their criteria and lower the requirements of teacher preparation programs, so teacher quality was viewed under a microscopic lens by policymakers (Gitomer et al., 1999). Policymakers developed the NCLB Act that started the reform in education. According to Spellings and Manning (2006), teachers are considered highly qualified under the NCLB Act, when he or she holds a bachelor's degree, has full state certification, and demonstrates competency in the core academic subjects they teach. Teachers who are prepared through the alternative route are considered highly qualified as long as they are making progress towards full certification as outlined by the state in which they teach (Spelling & Manning, 2006). GA TAPP teachers are administered tests to prove their subject competence and are required to be participating in an approved program leading to a renewable certificate (Robinson & Wearne, 2004).

As a result of this requirement, alternative preparation programs nationally have produced almost 30% of the new teacher population (Spellings & Manning, 2006). In Georgia, the number of new teachers has steadily increased since 2004. According to the *2006 Supply & Demand of Georgia Teachers report*, the identified shortage areas were in the fields of special education and elementary grades (Georgia Educator Workforce, 2006). The shortage area is identified through the use of the number of non-renewable certificates issued. Non-renewable certificates are certificates issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to teachers in order to fill the shortage content area. The request is made by the employing school system. Another indicator of teacher shortage is the discrepancy between the number of completers in

education preparation programs in the state and those available to hire in a particular content area. The identified shortage areas from this indicator were in mathematics, science, and language arts. “The Board of Regents (BOR) of Georgia approves critical shortage teaching fields... secondary content areas in math and science, middle grades, special education, and early childhood education [were identified as the shortage teaching areas] (Hendricks, 2010, p. 46).” According to the reports from the Institution of Higher Education and Regional Educational Service Agency, the number of program completers in education declined 20% in the last two years (Afolabi et al., 2008).

Although the number of completers declined by 20%, the total number of new hires who were alternatively prepared in the Georgia Public School sector was 3,503; which represents an increase of 26% . Consequently, GA TAPP teachers teaching at the high school level made up the majority of new teachers in the 2007 school year. The hiring of GA TAPP teachers also increased the number of special education teachers in the classroom. In 2007, an increase in the male population and persons of color in the total workforce was a result of the GA TAPP program (Afolabi et al., 2008). According to Hendricks (2010), “Georgia TAPP programs have increased the teacher workforce by 3,746 teachers [in which] 86% of those teachers are still teaching in Georgia (p. xiii).”

Demographics

Alternative teacher preparation programs have assisted in the diversification of the teacher workforce (Dill, 1996; Bowen, 2004). The under representation of subgroups of males and persons of color was another reason for the development of alternative teacher preparation programs (Birkeland & Peske, 2004). An older study by Natriello and Zumwalt (1992) revealed that the alternative teacher preparation program contributed substantial numbers of teachers to

urban schools, or from urban and rural areas noted from later research (Walsh & Jacob, 2007). These teachers are most likely to teach in the geographical locations and in the content area where teacher shortages have been identified (Roach & Cohen, 2002). Birkeland and Peske's (2004) and McWhorter's (2005) review of literature of several quantitative analyses reveals that higher proportions of males, persons of color, and older individuals have received their certification through the alternative teacher preparation program. People who majored in math, science, and foreign language have also participated in the alternative teacher preparation program. Birkeland and Peske's (2004) review of literature also highlighted that the people who participated in alternative teacher preparation programs in New York lived in urban areas, spoke multiple languages and wanted to teach the disadvantaged populations. In California, the alternative teacher preparation program produced three times as many males and teachers of color than the traditional preparation program (Birkeland & Peske, 2004).

Teachers of color are needed to serve as role models, academic leaders, and to enhance performance of students of various ethnicities (Chen, 2003). Principals in urban areas from Palmer's (1997) study believed that teachers need "opportunities for cross-cultural experiences for teachers that supported valuing of diversity of culture, language, and environments of children (p. 62)." Diversity among teachers helps build knowledge of background and the learning needs as well as limits the chance of stereotyping a particular culture (Chen, 2003). Teachers of color have a better understanding of the child's living environment and the child's cultural difference (Palmer, 1997; Jacob, 2006). The disposition towards minority students influences the success of the student in the classroom (Dill, 1996).

Not only are teachers needed to teach the minority population, but teachers are needed to teach the economically disadvantaged students found in rural and urban school districts

(Jacob, 2006). Before alternative teacher preparation programs, inexperienced and uncertified teachers taught in school districts in areas with families of low socio economic status.

“According to Jacob (2006), thirteen million children under eighteen lived in poverty and an overall child poverty rate of 17.8%" was evident in 2004 (p. 2).” The shortage areas in urban schools are in math and science content areas (Jacob, 2006). Currently, experienced and certified teachers are teaching in urban and high poverty areas as a result of alternative teacher preparation programs (Jacob, 2006). Title I school and schools who have not made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) have more persons of color because of the recruitment by alternative preparation programs to attract persons of color (Hendricks, 2010). The preparation programs and school districts collaborate to provide training and support to the alternatively prepared teachers teaching in the urban and rural schools (Jacob, 2006).

Instruction

The four essential aspects of teaching according Nagy’s (2006) literature review are the teacher’s understanding and integration of content knowledge, the ability to reflect on the lessons being taught, the ability to give meaningful assessments, and the ability to present their content knowledge to others. Principals with an increased minority population perceived alternatively prepared teachers proficient in the areas of instruction, assessment, and classroom management (Bowen, 2004). Some literature disputes this belief and states that teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs lack an understanding of pedagogy and instructional strategies needed to manage their classrooms and reach the diverse needs of their students (Noble, 2008; Walsh & Jacob, 2007). Salyer’s (2003) research reveals that alternatively prepared teachers view their previous careers as being important assets to teaching. The three themes that emerged from the interviews of the teachers in Salyer’s (2003) research pertaining to the contribution of their

previous job were 1) the “ability to incorporate very specialized, practical, and real-world knowledge into their instruction; 2) the possession of effective interpersonal skills; and 3) the possession of management and organizational skills (p. 21).”

Darling- Hammond and Berry’s (2001) literature describes alternatively prepared teachers as having little knowledge of the development of children or how to support their diverse learning styles. The literature review of Rubino et al., (1994), also suggests that teachers who receive training through alternative teacher preparation programs are less aware of how to redirect instruction when students do not understand, lack the skills needed to implement various teaching techniques, and are not in tune to the students’ different learning styles. The alternatively prepared teachers also may lack the understanding that the effective delivery of instruction to students is their responsibility.

Knowing the content and teaching the content to meet diverse learning abilities will help create a learning environment, and being organized enhance the instructional opportunity time. Teachers who are organized have the lesson plans and materials needed to carry out the instruction readily (Bowen, 2004). Organized teachers plan for the unexpected such as arrival of new students, or the need for additional material to help in explaining new concepts. Teachers must plan ahead to ensure optimum opportunity for student learning to occur. Teachers who are organized create “a rich instructional environment [which generates] the opportunity for students to be challenged and experience success (Bowen, 2004, p. 26).” These teachers have identifiable teacher traits, which include:

- Having organized classrooms that emphasize consistency with the central focus being teaching and learning.

- Consistently prioritizing student learning as the primary focus of their classrooms by modeling the desired behavior so as to communicate to the students the dedication to learning.
- Reinforcing their focus on teaching and learning through their allocation of time to the teaching and learning process and setting high expectations for student learning (Bowen, 2004, p. 26).

The literature review of Koller- Morris (2002) describes a study conducted by Knight, Owens, and Waxman in 1991 on the teaching characteristics of alternatively prepared teachers compared to traditionally prepared teachers. The study revealed that the alternatively prepared teacher had difficulties with pacing throughout the lesson as well as presenting activities that require higher- order thinking skills. Teachers should be able to present activities that require both high-order and low-order thinking skills (Bowen, 2004). The learning environment was better implemented by the traditionally prepared teacher in Knight, Owens, and Waxman's 1991 study (Koller-Morris, 2002). For example, Rubino et al., (1994) described a case study on two alternatively prepared teachers who taught secondary English. The teacher was having difficulties conveying what he knows about the content and what he wanted the students to know about the content due to lack of theoretical training of how students learn. The second alternatively prepared teacher replicated her method of learning to her teaching methods when she presented information to the students (Rubino et al., 1994). Teachers should be able to employ instructional strategies that engage the student in the learning process (Bowen, 2004).

The lack of content knowledge or pedagogical knowledge has not been correlated to the quality teaching students receive or has not been directly correlated to the rising test scores and increased academic success. Torff and Session (2005) conducted a study to assess the perceived

causes of teacher ineffectiveness using survey data. The high school principals were the key evaluators in the study. Principals were used in the study because they are the key evaluators of the teachers' classroom performance; they are responsible for the professional development opportunities for the teachers; they are the people who receive feedback from the teacher leaders at the school; and they are the people in charge of hiring and retaining teachers (Torff & Sessions, 2005). The teachers were assessed by five components:

1. Content knowledge- suitable expertise in the subject being taught.
 2. Lesson planning- preparation of appropriate learning experiences prior to an instructional period.
 3. Lesson- implementation skills- effective execution of planned learning experiences during an instructional period.
 4. Ability to establish rapport with students- adequate human relations and communications skills.
 5. Classroom management skills- ability to successfully keep students on task and attentive.
- (Torff & Sessions, 2005, p. 532).

According to the results of the study, the perceived causes of ineffective teaching were attributed to the lack of pedagogical knowledge. Pedagogical knowledge was defined in the study as the teacher's classroom management skills, lesson implementation skills, and rapport with students. Content knowledge was the lowest rated contributing factor to teacher effectiveness. The results of the study suggest that teachers should be prepared in content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in their preparation program whether if it is a traditional preparation program or an alternative teacher preparation program.

Classroom Management

Classroom management can be defined as “a teacher’s efforts to establish and maintain the classroom as an effective environment for teaching and learning (Ritter & Hancock, 2007, p. 1).” Classroom management influences the learning and the school climate. Teachers can maximize the amount of learning by creating an environment that limits the occurrences of disruption in the classroom (Ritter & Hancock, 2007). Classroom management is an essential tool teachers need in order to ensure optimal levels of learning experiences. Teachers who lack classroom management techniques will also lack a classroom environment that is conducive to learning (Kaplan & Owings, 2002).

Teaching students to be responsible for their behavior can decrease the number of discipline problems (Bowen, 2004). Consistent discipline and established routines are essential to establishing effective classroom management skills (Bowen, 2004). Ritter and Hancock (2007) conducted a study of 158 middle school teachers teaching in public schools in the southeastern area of the United States. The concluded findings of the research were that classroom management and the certification route did not influence the success of teachers. The research suggested that alternatively prepared teachers believe that teachers and students should have shared decision making for the classroom, thus traditionally prepared teachers believe that teachers should build relationships with the students they teach. This phenomenon is similar in both teacher preparation programs in allowing students to take responsibilities for their actions. A participant in Ritter and Hancock’s (2007) study states that alternative teacher preparation programs taught alternatively prepared teachers little about managing a classroom.

In the quest to define the lived experiences of six GA TAPP teachers, Mallard (2005) revealed that the biggest challenge that the novice teachers faced was managing behavior. The

summation of the overall problems the six participants identified was “the teachers had the content knowledge, but lacked the pedagogy to effectively transmit this knowledge via developmentally appropriate instructional methodologies (Mallard, 2005, p. 228).” One of the participants expressed a desire to have more classroom management strategies due to his difficulties of conveying his expectations to the students. Mallard (2005) highlighted that learning how to teach is also associated with the learning environment in which the instruction is to take place. Teachers who are good at managing their classrooms have the ability to multitask and have the knowledge of what is going on around them. Classroom managers have planned their lessons to include smooth transitions from one activity to the next and have the ability to anticipate potential disruptions and discipline problems that may occur (Bowen, 2004). During the teacher preparation stage, instruction in adolescent development and their disposition would aid alternatively prepared teachers in developing classroom management skills (Mallard, 2005). Alternatively prepared teachers are usually assigned to students who lack motivation and classrooms that veteran teachers have difficulties teaching (Mallard, 2005).

Comparison Studies

Several studies are available to researchers to gain an understanding of the differences of principal perceptions towards alternatively prepared teachers and traditionally prepared teachers. For example, Bowen (2004) conducted a comparison study of alternatively prepared teachers to traditionally prepared teachers in Texas. One-hundred and thirty-one principals in Southeast Texas completed a study, and subsequently gave insight of the teachers’ performance in the classrooms and their professional attitudes. Principals reported that alternatively prepared teachers had a positive impact on the teacher shortage as well as increasing the ethnic diversity in

the area. The ratings in actual performance in instruction and classroom management were significantly higher among the traditionally prepared teachers.

The school district used in Mahatha's (2005) research was in an urban area in New Orleans. The majority of the principals were at the elementary level and were females of color. The principals made comparisons of the teachers on their content knowledge, classroom management, instructional planning, human relations, and professionalism. Using survey data, the researcher revealed that both preparation programs were rated the same in the area of professionalism. Traditionally prepared teachers were rated slightly higher than alternatively prepared teachers according to the survey data. Mahatha's (2005) study also compared the responses based on the principal's ethnicity. The Caucasian principals rated the alternatively prepared teachers higher, but both Caucasian and persons of color rated their traditionally prepared teachers the same. Overall, this study rated the traditionally prepared teachers higher than the alternatively prepared teachers across all grade levels in classroom management.

McWorther's (2005) literature review revealed previous studies conducted by several researchers dated back in the 80s when alternative teacher preparation programs began. The notations of these studies are beneficial to understanding the comprehensive studies of the performance of teachers of both the traditional and alternative teacher preparation program. These studies represent the quantitative representation of principals' perceptions of the performance of alternatively prepared teachers. In 1988, Boser and Wiley used a representative sample of alternatively prepared teachers and compared them to traditionally prepared teachers. The alternatively prepared teachers were rated lower than their counterparts in the areas of classroom management and discipline, but received higher ratings in the area of content knowledge. The same results were evident in the area of classroom management in 1989 study

conducted by Hawk and Schmidt's using the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument (McWorther, 2005). Consequently in 1990, Hutton, Lutz, and Williamson compared the two preparation programs by using the Texas Teacher Appraisal System as a measure of quality teaching. Alternatively prepared teachers were rated the same or better than traditionally prepared teachers in the areas of instruction, classroom management, and professional growth.

Hall (2008) conducted a qualitative study of twelve alternatively prepared teachers and their principals located in Arkansas. His study also consisted of comparison information of the performance of alternatively prepared teachers and traditionally prepared teachers. The study sought to understand the classroom management skills and professionalism of both preparation groups. The principals were asked if they would recommend hiring the traditionally prepared teachers and alternatively prepared teachers. The alternatively prepared teachers were also asked for their perception of their experiences while participating in the program. Principals expressed that traditionally prepared teachers were more effective in classroom management than alternatively prepared teachers their first year in the classroom. After alternatively prepared teachers' first year of teaching, the principals did not observe major differences in their classroom management. Ten out of twelve principals expressed that they prefer hiring alternatively prepared teachers because of their willingness to accept constructive criticism and to comply with directives. One principal who was not included in the ten stated that he does not have a preference of hiring traditionally or alternatively prepared teachers. Principals expressed their concerns of the teachers' classroom performance. The principals were concerned with the lack of training in incorporating technology into their lesson plans, teaching cultural diverse students, curriculum, teaching students with disabilities, and proper assessment techniques.

According to the responses from the alternatively prepared teachers, they had received instruction on implementing technology in their lessons. Their mentors helped them with their lesson plans and incorporating benchmark assessments. Alternatively prepared teachers expressed a desire to be in the classroom observing veteran teachers instead of learning effective teaching strategies from their textbooks. The teachers also expressed difficulties managing their time to meet the demands of their preparation programs while carrying out their teaching duties.

Mahatha (2005) states that the comparisons of the qualifications of alternatively prepared teachers to those who traditionally prepared teachers are somewhat misleading due to other teacher characteristics such as higher GPAs or rigorous screening processes that may effect the success of the teachers from either preparation program. In addition, comparisons of the teaching of alternatively prepared teachers to that of traditionally prepared teachers often employ weak or non-systematic methodology to assess of teacher performance or rely on state or district measures of students' test scores (Mahatha, 2005).

Negative Impact on Teaching

Opponents of alternative teacher preparation programs believe that the quality of the teacher and the education system are being compromised with the quick routes towards certification (Mayer, Decker, Glazerman, & Silva, 2003; Chen, 2003). Alternative teacher preparation programs are viewed negatively because the teacher candidate begins teaching with little to no teaching training prior to entering the classroom (Mayer et al., 2003). Alternatively prepared teachers do not have their complete certification until their second to third year of teaching which adds concerns to the quality of instruction students are receiving in the classroom (Mayer et al., 2003). Alternatively prepared teachers are viewed with much scrutiny due to the

lack of pedagogical training and knowledge of theories that are viewed necessary in learning how to teach diverse students. Echoing the criticism, alternatively prepared teachers are usually placed at hard-to-staff schools with “greater risk of academic failure (Scarborough, 2007, p. 19).”

Positive Impact on Teaching

On the other side of the spectrum, alternative teacher preparation programs were initially developed to help with demand of more teachers in the areas of secondary math and science (Mayer et al., 2003). As shortages increased in content areas, the launch for alternative teacher preparation programs began to aid in providing teachers in special education classrooms, and in rural and urban schools (Mayer et al., 2003) and also in content areas such as, math, science, and bilingual education (McWhorther, 2005). According to Mahatha’s (2005) review of literature, alternative teacher preparation programs mainly focus on the pragmatic aspects of teaching rather than the theoretical or philosophical aspects of teaching. Theoretical or philosophical focus is an asset to new teachers when learning the craft of teaching with incorporation of job embedded and situational-specific professional development (Mahatha, 2005; Roach & Cohen, 2002).

Another benefit is that the preparation program providers can strategically recruit teacher candidates who will be trained in the districts and certain content areas that the school districts need in order to fulfill their vacant teacher positions (Roach & Cohen, 2002). Alternative teacher preparation programs attract individuals with a variety of undergraduate majors and career experiences to education (Roach & Cohen, 2002). These individuals are also considered to bring maturity and varied work experiences (Chen, 2003).

Viewpoints on Hiring Alternatively Prepared Teachers

Hiring teachers who are highly qualified have become an important focus of school districts, state legislatures, and licensing agencies (Bowen, 2004). Hiring decisions have a long-lasting effect on the school culture and student achievement because each teacher hired will come into contact with hundreds of students throughout his or her teaching career (Salyer, 2003). Roach and Cohen (2002) stated that schools in rural or suburban areas have difficulties hiring teachers. Schools located in urban areas have difficulties hiring persons of color, and principals in urban schools reported that they would hire traditionally prepared teachers as opposed to alternatively prepared teachers (Bowen, 2004). Subsequently, principals do not hire teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs because of the amount of support required, and the problems that these teachers may have regarding discipline, lesson planning, student interaction, assessments, and instructional strategies in their novice years in the classroom (Noble, 2008). The type of preparation program the teachers participated in usually is not a significant factor in the hiring process, but all aspects of the candidates' ability to promote student achievement and their effectiveness in the classroom may be considered when hiring (Mahatha, 2005).

In 2002, Reichardt used interview data to determine the current practices and policies of school districts and their use of teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs. The districts hired alternatively prepared teachers in the areas of special education, foreign language, math, science, and bilingual education. During the research, Reichardt (2002) discovered that "States set their own rules and regulations for teacher preparation programs (p. 1)." Another key factor revealed that the preparation, certification, and what is needed to perform the job were not all correlated. Novice teachers enter the classroom with little knowledge about how to perform their jobs. Reichardt (2002) concluded in his research that the principals and district level

administrators in his study did not prefer hiring teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs due to the lack of training in classroom management and instruction prior to entering the classroom; however, after a few months, the alternatively prepared teacher obtains these skills.

Gantner, Jenkins, and Layton (2006) conducted a pilot study to determine the perceptions of superintendents, human resource directors, and principals in five Metro-Atlanta school systems. The results of the pilot study revealed concerns of the adequacy of preparation for teachers who gain certification through alternative routes. The findings suggest discrepancies between central office administrators and principals about whether they would hire new teachers who gained certification through traditional preparation programs or alternative teacher preparation programs. This discrepancy may be influenced by the level of involvement or support with the teachers being hired (Scarborough, 2007).

Nagy's (2006) research included principals' perception in rehiring alternatively prepared teachers if they had to make the decision again. The following are some of the comments of the principals participating in the survey about the alternatively prepared teachers:

- They bring expertise to the classroom.
- They are eager to learn and are focused on the content.
- They are not prepared for the classroom challenges.
- They have difficulties delivering sustained lessons.
- Classroom management skills are lacking.
- Success rate is not stellar.
- They are reliable and competent.

- We hire them, train them, work through the difficult times, and then they leave to go to another district.

(Nagy, 2006, p. 118).

After the principals completed the surveys, the researcher in Nagy's (2006) study conducted interviews with various principals. From those interviews, the researcher captured the lived experiences through qualitative methods. From the narrative of one principal, a weakness that he observed in alternatively prepared teachers was the lack of experience in working with adolescent learners and the pedagogy skills of the teacher. This principal also noted that he reviewed the teachers' resumes to see if the teacher candidate had any experiences in working with adolescents when considering hiring teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs. The principals were also asked to make comparisons between the traditionally and alternatively prepared teachers. During the interviews with the alternatively prepared teachers, the principal noticed the lack of educational jargon used by the teacher candidate if they were in their novice years of classroom teaching.

Principals believe that understanding the learner, having a variety of teaching strategies, knowing classroom management techniques, and possessing pedagogical knowledge are important characteristics teachers should have regardless of the preparation program (Marshall, 2006). Principals want teachers who are able to problem solve and have various educational strategies to meet the overall needs of their students (Palmer, 1997). The overall advantages in hiring alternatively prepared teachers are similar to the study conducted in four school districts located in Florida. The principals in the study revealed that the advantages to hiring alternatively prepared teachers are the ability to attract minority teachers, the elimination of teacher shortage areas, and the higher level of commitment due to maturity (Marshall, 2006). The disadvantages

of alternatively prepared teachers are the inadequate training received before entering the classroom and the alternatively prepared teachers being overwhelmed (Marshall, 2006).

Principals do not have affirmation that students benefit from instruction given by alternatively or traditionally prepared teachers (Owings et al., 2006). If principals had research-based findings on the effectiveness of alternatively prepared teachers, their hiring decisions would be much easier (Owings et al., 2006).

Summary

Alternatively prepared teachers have made impacts on education. The impacts the teachers have made have been expressed both positively and negatively. An increase of novice teachers, males, and teachers of color, has been linked to teachers participating in alternative teacher preparation programs. Alternatively prepared teachers have been linked as well to teaching in hard to staff content areas and geographical areas. Each state has developed alternative teacher preparation programs for different reasons, and the preparation programs vary from state-to-state. The development of the alternative teacher preparation program originally was due to shortages of teachers and attracting more talented teachers to Georgia. The Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program is currently known as the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GA TAPP). The program is implemented through three types of program providers. The program providers are RESAs, school districts, and institutions of higher education. The alternative teacher preparation program allows individuals who have a bachelor's degree to receive certification in education after completion of a one to three year preparation program. Although the reasons for developing alternative teacher preparation programs have been clearly defined among states, research on the impact of the programs is contradictory in the

areas of alternatively prepared teachers' abilities to teach, manage the classroom, and their performance compared to the traditionally prepared teachers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter three provides the methodology of this study. The procedures taken to conduct the research of the impact alternatively prepared teachers have on the Middle Georgia area will be thoroughly explained throughout this chapter. The researcher used a basic qualitative research design. The information discussed includes the researcher's role, research questions, research design, population, instrumentation, and procedures in collecting and analyzing the data.

The Role of the Researcher

"Researchers are the translators of other persons' words and actions", so understanding the researcher's role is imperative to understanding the reason for conducting this study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 49). The purpose of this study was to identify the perspectives of principals regarding the GA TAPP program. The researcher became interested in this program when sharing an office with a Georgia TAPP candidate. This person was considered highly qualified in the area that he taught and was an educator through a different preparation route than the researcher. While sharing the office, the researcher became a mentor to the candidate and grew interested in his experiences through the alternative teacher preparation program. This individual had been employed for a major airline and majored in mathematics in college. The researcher was very intrigued by the transition the GA TAPP candidate made in becoming a teacher and began researching this unique group.

Currently, the researcher serves as the Special Education Department Chair at a school. One of the job duties is to ensure that highly qualified teachers are hired. In conversations with colleagues and other leaders, the researcher was informed that alternatively prepared teachers have been used in filling vacancies that may occur. The researcher became interested in learning

about the impact that alternatively prepared teachers have on filling teaching positions as well as understanding their performance in the classroom setting. To gain an understanding of the impact alternative teacher preparation programs have in the Middle Georgia area, the researcher chose to conduct research using high school principals. The study of high schools aided the researcher in identifying specific content areas alternatively prepared teachers fill.

Research Questions

The researcher obtained the understanding of the principals' perceptions with the following overarching question: How do principals perceive teachers who received certification through the alternative teacher preparation programs as meeting the needs of school districts in Georgia? The overarching question was answered through the following sub-questions:

1. How do teachers who are prepared through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy meet teacher shortage areas in the Middle Georgia area?
2. How are alternatively prepared teachers performing in meeting their teaching duties?
3. What challenges and benefits are evident in classroom management and instruction of alternatively prepared teachers?
4. How are alternatively prepared teachers equipped with content knowledge to meet the needs of their students?

Research Design

The researcher employed a basic qualitative approach in order to understand the perspective of high school principals on the impact of alternatively prepared teachers in the Middle Georgia area. A qualitative design captures more of "an authentic understanding of people's experiences (Silverman, 2001, p. 10)." In understanding the rationale of using qualitative research, Bogdan and Biklen (1998) distinguished the purposes of qualitative versus

quantitative research when they wrote, “the open-ended nature of the approach allows the subjects to answer from their own frame of reference rather than from one structured by prearranged questions (p. 3).” Qualitative research focuses on understanding through verbal narratives and the observations of participants rather than on predetermined responses, quantitative methods, thus limiting a clear understanding of principals’ perceptions of alternatively prepared teachers (Merriam, 1998). The semi-structured interview was the main method of data collection. The focus of using interviews for data collection obtained information on the impact of alternatively prepared teachers in the Middle Georgia area that are not readily observable or quantifiable (Merriam, 1998). The researcher obtained rich data on GA TAPP teacher performance in classroom management, instruction, and other teaching duties by the use of interview questions. Through qualitative interview, the researcher obtained an understanding of experiences and reconstructed events (Mallard, 2005; Noble, 2008; Scarborough, 2007). The researcher was interested in discovering if GA TAPP teachers fill identified shortage areas in high school settings which have been identified as a phenomenon of the development of alternative teacher preparation programs.

Participants

The researcher utilized purposeful sampling in choosing the participants. Merriam (1998) states, “Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand , and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned (p. 61).” In qualitative studies, participants are chosen by design because of their knowledge or experience they have that is appropriate to the study. Gay (1998) stated that the individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population.

When a representative sample is well selected, the research results based on it can be generalized to another population (Gay, 1998). The representative sample consisted of eight principals from the Middle Georgia RESA area. The Middle Georgia area consists of seven school districts, and the researcher obtained permission from the superintendent to conduct research from six out of seven counties. Four school districts only have one high school in their districts. The other two districts have two or more high schools located in their school districts. After obtaining permission from the superintendent, two principals did not want to participate in the study. Below is a visual representation of the participants' demographic information.

Table 3.1

Participants' Gender and Ethnic Information

Participant	Gender	Ethnicity
1	Female	Person of Color
2	Male	Caucasian
3	Male	Caucasian
4	Male	Person of Color
5	Male	Person of Color
6	Female	Person of Color
7	Male	Person of Color
8	Female	Caucasian

The researcher solicited volunteers to participate in the study. The participants consisted of eight principals at the high school level located in the Middle Georgia RESA area. Selection criteria included (a) high school principals, (b) permission from the district Superintendent, (c)

volunteer participation in the study, and (d) principals who hired teachers who received certification through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy. Career Centers and Alternative Schools were excluded from the study. Career Centers and Alternative Schools have multiple grade levels represented which may change the results of studying only the perceptions of high school principals. Principals were used in this study because they serve as key roles in identifying the need of the school. According to Finn's (2009) review of literature, Erickson and Reller in 1979 stated that:

The principalship continues to be one of the most durable and critical positions in the administration of American schools. Although there are variations in the size and location of schools and school systems, differences in the personalities and experiential backgrounds of principals, and variation in the socio-economic circumstances of children, youth and parents served, the building principal remains the administrator most closely associated with the daily operations of the school, with the implementation of curriculum, and with its association with the community (p. 34).

Principals were utilized as participants because they are in the best position to assess how well an individual matches the school's vision and meeting the students' needs. Principals make recommendations for hiring teacher candidates, and they also are responsible for the development of professional development courses to help teachers learn strategies to implement in the classroom. Principals' evaluations help identify the overall impact a teacher's instruction has on their students' learning. Another role of principals is their awareness of the teachers' abilities through annual evaluations. Through evaluations of teachers' instructions, principals identify goals and school improvement for the school. The participants were chosen because they

are the individuals who hire teacher-candidates at their schools and can provide meaningful information as it relates to the study. Anonymity is used to protect the identity of the participants.

Instrumentation

Interviewing is a popular method of obtaining data in a qualitative study (Dilley, 2004). Interviewing is “the art of hearing data (Dilley, 2004, p. 129).” Data were obtained through semi-structured interview questions. The interview questions were developed from the empirical studies and the theoretical source revealed in the literature (see Appendix D). Interview questions were open-ended questions to allow the participants an opportunity to share their views. By interviewing the participants, the researcher obtained descriptions of specific situations and actions of alternatively prepared teachers in educational settings instead of using Likert scales that limits the participants’ perceptions to general opinions or predetermined responses of the participants’ views of the impact alternatively prepared teachers have on their schools. Interviewing allows the researcher to encourage the participants to describe their experiences and perceptions of alternatively prepared teachers (Kvale, 1996). The researcher wanted to obtain knowledge of the GA TAPP teachers’ classroom management skills, content knowledge, and instructional skills through the participants’ descriptions of their observed encounters through the interviewing process. In order to obtain this information, the qualitative method was chosen for this study.

Three principals who have knowledge and experience in working with the GA TAPP teachers were given a week to review the interview questions. After the week, the three principals’ feedback was given to ensure the desired interpretation on the interview questions is constructed to have appropriate meaning. The three principals provided suggestions for constructing the questions in order to have clarity. Questions include understanding principals’ a)

hiring processes; b) reasons for hiring GA TAPP teachers; c) views of any strengths and weaknesses observed when working with GA TAPP teachers; and d) views of the teachers' performance instructionally and in classroom management. Demographic information was part of the interview process (see Appendix C). The questions include the participants' administrative experience, geographical location of the school, years of experience in working with alternatively prepared teachers, and years of experience as a principal. A question of the specific content area GA TAPP teachers teach was also a part of the demographic information. The interview process lasted approximately 55 minutes.

Data Collection Procedures

After revising the interview questions, the researcher obtained permission from the superintendents of the six counties located in the Middle Georgia Area to conduct the research and interview (see Appendix E). Permission was obtained by Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Georgia Southern University before any data collection (see Appendix F). Once the permission from the IRB committee was given, the researcher mailed an introductory letter to the high school principals explaining the significance of the study and requesting their participation in the study (see Appendix G). The letter explained that interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed, and the identity of the participant will remain confidential. Each principal received a self-addressed envelope with return postage to return their agreement to participate. Accompanying each letter was an acknowledgement of agreement to participate form indicating their willingness to participate in the study (see Appendix G). The principals were given two weeks to reply to the request before the researcher contacted the principal by telephone to determine his or her willingness to participate in the study. The researcher also emailed the

principals that were unable to be reached by telephone to obtain their willingness to participate in the study.

Upon return of the agreement to participate, the researcher conducted the interviews at the participant's school which is the natural setting. Creswell (1998) suggests that the location is important to collect relevant data from the individuals who have experienced the setting in which the phenomenon occurred. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher read and obtained signatures on the informed consent form from the participants (see Appendix H). The researcher discussed the purpose of the study with the participants in order to establish a rationale and an interest in studying the alternative teacher preparation program. It is important to establish trust with the participants because “respondents are much more likely to be both candid and forthcoming if they respect the inquirer and believe in his or her own integrity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 256).” Demographic questions were completed as part of the interview process (see Appendix C).

Each interview depended upon questions that developed spontaneously during the interview. Questions were asked in order to provide clarity of what the participant was saying. Probing questions were used to allow the researcher an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions. The researcher probed the participants during the interviews when the statements that were made required elaboration. Also during some of the interviews, the researcher changed the arrangement of questions in order to receive further elaboration on the answers the participants provided. In addition, the participants answered demographic questions at the end of each interview. At the end of each interview, the researcher completed a visual glance over the interview questions to make sure that each interview question was answered by the participant. The researcher obtained permission to contact the participants

again to obtain clarification and verification of information after the interview were transcribed. The interviews were administered in the month of April.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves generating, developing and verifying key concepts through transcripts provided from the interview data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). After each interview, the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim and stored on a flash drive in a Microsoft Word document. The researcher used a third party to transcribe the audiotapes verbatim. The researcher maintained the confidentiality by ensuring that the third party did not receive any identifiable information about the participant. Each tape was labeled with the pseudonym given to the participant. The first step in the data analysis process was reading the material from beginning to end in order to become familiar with the text (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Corbin and Strauss (2008) state that the researcher reading the transcript allows the researcher to "enter vicariously into the life of the participant (p. 163)."

Coding is the process of reading the data, asking questions about the data, making comparison between data, and identifying concepts that represent the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). "As the researcher coded the data, new understandings... of the data may necessitate changes" in the original codes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 161). Once the codes were established, the researcher utilized different colored highlighter pens throughout the process of coding data.

Also, the researcher used "constant comparisons" between each collection to obtain similarities and differences in the participants' experiences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 73). When using the word directly from data as a code it is called an in-vivo code. Emotions and feelings cue the analysis as to the meaning of the events to the person (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Noting the emotions and feelings towards the alternative preparation program was needed to establish the bias of the participants' experiences with GA TAPP teachers. "Time words" were also identified in the data to note any change or shift in perceptions, in thoughts, events, or interpretation of events (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 83). Time words were needed to identify the participants' views before a specific setting and after a specific experience. Time words help the researcher establish an understanding of the alternatively prepared teachers' performance before and after the first year of teaching. Patton (2002) notes that "interpretation means attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order (p. 480)."

Credibility

Credibility or internal validity is the researcher's ability to "correctly portray the data collected (Bloor & Wood, 2006, p. 148)." The researcher obtained internal validity through the use of member check. Member check is when the researcher takes the transcript and the initial interpretation back to the participant for affirmation and corrections. Member checking is "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314)." It is the researcher's attempt to convey the truth or the exact perception of the participants' experiences. Validity deals with "the notion that what you say you have observed is, in fact, what really happened (Anfara, Brown, & Manigone, 2002, p. 30)." The participants reviewing their transcripts ensured their perceptions were conveyed accurately. Also, to ensure credibility the researcher interviewed principals from various school districts in Middle Georgia. This process ensured that the study is accurate through the use of triangulation which is the process of "corroborating evidence from different individuals (Anfara et al., 2002, p. 33)." External validity

or transferability helps to make sure the findings can be transferable from those being studied to a larger population (Creswell, 1994; Anfara et al., 2002). Also, the researcher ensured that the data collected are accurate through the use of audio recording (Bloor & Wood, 2006).

The researcher may have had unintentional preconceptions of alternatively prepared teachers because the researcher was a mentor to a teacher who participated in the alternative preparation program, and currently is a special education department chair who currently has six alternatively prepared teachers in her department. The researcher has knowledge of the planning the program providers do in order to tailor a preparation program that meets the needs of school districts and the teacher candidates who participate in the GA TAPP preparation program. The researcher understands the mission of the preparation program and the rationale for the requirements of the teacher candidates completing the program. The need to gain more insight on the performance of alternatively prepared teachers guided my decision of this research topic. The purpose of acknowledging the researcher's experiencing with GA TAPP teachers is to bring awareness of subjectivities to protect the trustworthiness of the results. To address the concerns of the researcher bias, the researcher used direct quotes from the participants, the participants checked the findings to make sure their views were conveyed correctly, the researcher read and reread the transcripts before making any coding of the data, and the researcher interviewed principals from various school districts in the Middle Georgia area.

Dependability

Reliability or dependability is about accuracy. It pertains to the consistency of the research findings (Kvale, 1996). According to Shank (2002), "if we keep measuring the same thing and keep getting the same results, then chances are we are measuring accurately (p. 91)." During data analysis, the researcher checked the data to confirm relevancy. Creswell (1994)

suggests that the researcher poses questions about the data and the categories developed. The researcher should return to the data and look for evidence, incidents, and events that support or refute the questions and categories, thereby verifying the data (Creswell, 1998). In order to ensure reliability is evident in this study, Creswell (1998) suggests that the researcher should describe the procedure from which data will be obtained and the researcher's role in the topic.

Summary

This research study explored and analyzed principals' perceptions of the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy in the Middle Georgia Area. This chapter describes the methods and procedures that were used to conduct this research. The methodology that was used in this study was a basic qualitative research design. The researcher obtained interview data from the use of semi-structured interview questions developed from the literature. Data analysis consisted of identifying common themes and ideas and presenting the responses in narrative form. Analysis of the data and findings will be presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of this research study was to understand the impact that alternatively prepared teachers have on schools in the Middle Georgia area. The study focused on the opinions of high school principals as they related to teachers from the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program's classroom management, instructional ability, professionalism, content knowledge, and pedagogy skills. This study was a basic qualitative approach using interview data from semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Interview questions were derived from several components of the literature review. The interview data were used to answer the overarching research question: how do principals perceive teachers who received certification through the alternative teacher preparation program as meeting the needs of school districts located in the Middle Georgia area? The following four sub-questions also guided the research:

1. How do teachers who are prepared through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy meet teacher shortage area in the Middle Georgia area?
2. How are alternatively prepared teachers performing in meeting their teaching duties?
3. What challenges and benefits are evident in classroom management and instruction of alternatively prepared teachers?
4. How are alternatively prepared teachers equipped with content knowledge to meet the needs of their students?

The collected data were transcribed and analyzed into common themes to generate a written report. The remainder of this chapter reports the findings of each research question.

Principals were asked to complete a demographic section as part of the interview process to determine administrative experience, number of alternatively prepared teachers, total number of teachers, location of the school, content areas the alternatively prepared teachers teach, and whether or not they had evaluated alternatively prepared teachers (see Tables 4.1 & 4.2).

Table 4.1

Demographic information of High School Principals

Principal	Gender	Ethnicity	Administrative Experience	Highest Degree	Views of alternatively prepared teachers
Marissa	Female	Person of Color	8-11 years	Masters	Proponent
Craig	Male	Caucasian	12-15 years	Specialist	Opponent
Dr. Dewayne	Male	Caucasian	4-7 years	Doctorate	Proponent
Kevin	Male	Person of Color	8-11 years	Specialist	Proponent
John	Male	Person of Color	12-15 years	Masters	Proponent
Dr. Sharon	Female	Person of Color	8-11 years	Doctorate	Proponent
Adam	Male	Person of Color	8-11 years	Masters	Proponent
Lisa	Female	Caucasian	8-11 years	Specialist	Proponent

Table 4.2

Demographics of the Schools

Principal	Total Number of Teachers	Total Number of Alternatively Prepared Teachers	Location
Marissa	180	10	Suburban
Craig	85	8	Rural
Dr. Dewayne	73	2	Rural
Kevin	60	8	Rural
John	52	6	Urban
Dr. Sharon	60	3	Suburban
Adam	33	8	Rural
Lisa	92	9	Urban

The majority of the high schools studied were led by persons of color and by males. The participants consisted of three females and five males. The demographic section asked principals to indicate the number of years they had been in administration. All of the participants had at least four years of administrative experience. The participants' administrative experience recorded in the demographic section included both assistant principal and principal experiences. Two of the participants had doctoral degrees, and one of the participants was a former GATAPP teacher who currently holds a masters degree, which was communicated during the interview process. All of the participants have both hired and worked with GATAPP teachers while in an administrative position. The participants indicated during the interview of having knowledge of when the GA TAPP first originated. The majority of high schools used for this research were located in rural areas. High schools located in urban and suburban areas were also represented in this study (see Table 4.2).

Research sub-question one

How do teachers who are prepared through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy meet teacher shortage areas in the Middle Georgia area?

In this section, a synopsis has been written of the eight high school principals in order to provide the reader with specific demographic information about the participants and to establish the participants' views during their quest of filling teacher positions and their interview process. In an effort to provide a detailed synopsis of participants' perspectives, the researcher explored principals' reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teachers as well as the rationale for hiring teachers to teach at their schools. Quotes have been added to maintain a clear perspective of the principals' views. During the interviews with the high school principals, their views on what they look for when hiring a teacher candidate and the reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teacher were discussed. At the end of each synopsis, the principals' reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teachers have been condensed into themes.

Participants

Principal Dr. Sharon

Principal Dr. Sharon currently has eleven years of administrative experience, and she is currently employed in a suburban high school. At her high school, she has a population of sixty teachers, and three of the teachers were prepared through the GA TAPP program. Her school is not encountering any teacher shortage areas, but has experienced shortage areas in science, math, and special education in the past. Principal Dr. Sharon has ten years of experience in working with GA TAPP teachers, and has hired a total of eight teachers who received their certification through the alternative teacher preparation program. Her reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teachers were a result of teacher shortages in specific content areas and limited qualified

applicants on file in her school district. Principal Dr. Sharon was also asked about the characteristics that she looks for when hiring a teacher candidate for her school. Principal Dr. Sharon indicated that overall she looks for a teacher candidate:

who can share the love of the subject with the students; an ability to make the material being taught stimulating and interesting; showing concern and respect for students; an ability to improvise and adapt to new demands; use valid assessment methods; provide feedback on students' performance; and desires to learn from the students and professional development opportunities on effective teaching practices.

Dr. Sharon's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

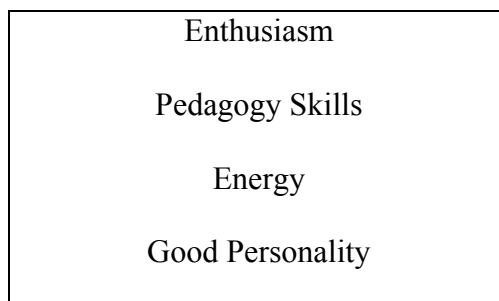
Teacher Shortage Area
Content Knowledge
Limited Qualified Candidates

Principal Lisa

Principal Lisa currently has thirty years of experience in education and of those years, nine of them have been in administration. At her urban high school, she has ninety-two teachers, and nine of them are teachers who have received certification through the GA TAPP program. The teachers are currently teaching in the areas of special education, marketing education, business education, technology education, mathematics, biology, and foreign language. Principal Lisa indicated that she has not encountered any teacher shortages while being the administrator at her school, but has hired at least one hundred alternatively prepared teachers. Principal Lisa stated that she hires alternatively prepared teachers because of the same reasons for hiring any certified teacher. She indicated that when she is looking for a teacher to fill a position at her

school, she wants somebody who comes in enthusiastic about working with children, and has some type of idea of what they would like to see in a classroom, someone who can talk fluently about their pedagogy in their area of expertise, someone with energy, and someone who asks questions during the interview about the school. Overall, Principal Lisa summarized that she looks for teacher candidates who exhibit enthusiasm, interest, and proficiency in their particular area of expertise. Principal Lisa states, “I am a firm believer that we stand at the threshold of every kid’s future, and I want somebody who is willing to open that door.” In order to find that person who matches the culture of her school, she uses a quasi interview approach. During her quasi interview approach, she uses several teachers and department chairs to ask interview questions. The reason for this approach is her need to obtain “different opinions and different sets of eyes evaluating before hiring [a teacher].” Principal Lisa also believes when interviewing a teacher candidate:

You have to find a way to pull their personality out during the interview. Because personality I think carries a lot of weight. You carry that personality into the classroom and if you have a giving spirit usually you make a good teacher. If you don’t, you don’t. So I think it is really important for us to be able to look at people regardless of what their preparation is and find out what their personality style is and see if they will fit. You have to know your own people well and know what the climate and culture are of your own school. Somebody who might fit great at my school wouldn’t do well at another school located in my district.

Lisa's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers**Principal Dr. Dewayne**

Principal Dr. Dewayne has thirteen years of administrative experience, and is currently serving as a high school principal located in a rural area. He currently has a total of eighty- five teachers, and eight of them are alternatively prepared. Principal Dr. Dewayne stated alternatively prepared teachers at his school teach in the areas of language arts, mathematics, special education, history, and geography. His school was not currently experiencing any teacher shortages, but indicated that the GA TAPP program has been good for his school when he experienced shortages of teachers. During the teacher shortage, GA TAPP teachers filled positions in special education, history, mathematics, history, geography, and language arts. Principal Dr. Dewayne had eight years of experience with alternatively prepared teachers, and has hired at least eight teachers as an administrator. Principal Dr. Dewayne's rationale for hiring GA TAPP teachers was "due to the shortage of teachers in certain content areas. I do not have a problem with hiring GA TAPP teachers if they meet qualifications, have high standards, and are sound in their content area."

Principal Dr. Dewayne was asked to give characteristics that he looked for when hiring a teacher candidate and not just alternatively prepared teachers. Principal Dr. Dewayne's overall

requirements of teachers were to have a love for kids and a willingness to participate in extracurricular activities. He proceeded by saying:

For me is to try to find out if there is a love of kids. I think you can't do this job if you don't love kids, because there are so many obstacles that get in your way. You need to have a love for kids, and they (teacher candidate) need to have a good work ethic, and to be a team player. I look for someone that understands the issues that kids come to school with every day, and someone who will try to be as patient as they can with them. I look for someone who is organized, and who has structure in their classroom, and someone that is a hard worker.

Dr. Dewayne's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

Shortage Area
Content Knowledge
Qualifications

Principal John

Principal John has twelve years of administrative experience, and he is currently employed in an urban high school. At his high school, he has a population of fifty-two teachers with six of them being alternatively prepared. His school is not experiencing any teacher shortages at the time of the study. Alternatively prepared teachers are currently teaching in the areas of special education, marketing education, foreign language, mathematics, family and consumer science, and biology. Principal John has four years of experience in working with GA TAPP teachers, and he has hired about two teachers who received their certification through the GA TAPP program. Principal John received his certification through the alternative teacher

preparation program, one-year supervised program. Prior to participating in the GA TAPP program, he served in the military. Principal John stated that his military experience taught him the leadership skills needed to be successful in the profession of education. He hired traditionally prepared and alternatively prepared teachers because he likes to have a mixture of teachers. When hiring alternatively prepared teachers, Principal John states that he is looking for a person with good communication skills, and a person who is good with adults and young people. Also, Principal John would like the applicant to have a solid foundation in their content area and pedagogy skills as well as possess skills that they can teach using their life experiences.

John's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

Mixture of Teachers
Communication Skills
Interpersonal Skills
Content Knowledge
Pedagogy Skills
Teach Using Life Experiences

Principal Kevin

Principal Kevin has ten years of administrative experience, and is currently teaching at a rural high school. His school has sixty teachers with eight of the teachers receiving their certification through the alternative teacher preparation program. The teachers who are alternatively prepared teach in the areas of special education, language arts, mathematics, biology, history, political science, and science. Principal Kevin has worked with alternatively prepared teachers for about eight years, and has hired ten GA TAPP teachers. He stated that he

hired alternatively prepared teachers because they were the best candidates for the jobs. When making overall teacher selections to hire at his school, he uses the Teach Georgia website. Principal Kevin was asked to identify the overall characteristics he looks for when hiring a teacher. Principal Kevin stated that he looks for someone who has content knowledge of the subject matter and education background in that area. Secondly, one that has the personality and disposition to do well with kids. Thirdly, one who is willing to realistically be made over again...to be taught in professional development classes and learn new skills to work with kids and make kids successful.

Kevin's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

Best Candidate

Principal Marissa

Principal Marissa has eleven years of experience in administration, and is currently a high school principal at a suburban school. At her school, she has a total of one hundred and eighty teachers, and of those teachers ten of them received their certification through the GA TAPP program. Teachers at her school who were alternatively prepared are currently teaching in the areas of special education, language arts, mathematics, economics, history, chemistry, and science. Her school is not experiencing any teacher shortages at the time of the study. When Principal Marissa was asked why she hired teachers who were alternatively prepared, she stated the reasons were:

When I was in an urban population, lower socioeconomic area, it was due to teacher shortages in major areas like math, science, and special education. We needed those teachers. Here, it is just looking for a quality teacher and you happen to be GA TAPP,

but [at my previous school, which is located in an urban area] it was really due to teacher shortages. Several schools were not choosing GA TAPP teachers, but we used them there and they were excellent.

Overall when considering hiring a teacher, Principal Marissa indicated five essential characteristics that she looks for when considering hiring a teacher:

The first thing I look for is enthusiasm. Do you have a passion for teaching all types of children, not just the children that you assume or you perceive that you have from the data that you see. Any child that I give you, you are willing to give your all and your best. So the first quality really is enthusiasm and passion. The second would be probably a real need to serve, which is to serve in any capacity that we need you to. Not only instructionally as a teacher, but things that we need volunteers. Are you willing to serve? School is essentially a community. The third thing, and all of these essential characteristics being equal, I would say that you have to have a mastery of your content. You got to know your content inside and out, so that you can do the things that you need to do to fit the needs of all children. The fourth thing would be pedagogy. You have got to know how to teach. Knowing is not enough. You can have everything you want inside your brain, but if you don't know how to teach it that is where it is going to stay. Essentially, our responsibility is to give the content knowledge to the student. The last thing, and there are many more but the last thing is superb personal communication skills. You've got to be able to show through your communication that you are respectful of all regardless of any other social conditions, physical conditions, anything like that. You respect your job, other teachers, our parents, our students, and everyone else in the

building. Not knowing or thinking you are respectful, but actually communicating and showing it. Those things are essential.

Marissa's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

Lower Socioeconomic Area
Teacher Shortage
Quality Teacher

Principal Adam

Principal Adam has eight years of administrative experience, and is currently a principal at a rural high school located in the Middle Georgia area. At his high school, he currently has thirty-three teachers and of those teachers eight received their teaching certification through the GA TAPP program. The alternatively prepared teachers are currently teaching in the content areas of mathematics, special education, biology, history, and video broadcasting. Principal Adam indicated that he has experienced teacher shortage areas at his school in special education, mathematics, and history, but currently does not have any shortage areas at the time of the study. He had eight years of working with GA TAPP teachers and has hired ten teachers while being an administrator. Principal Adam indicated that he hired alternatively prepared teachers because the teacher was the best candidate and possessed the background knowledge for the position unlike the traditionally prepared teacher who was fresh out of college. When looking for a teacher candidate, Principal Adam stated that he looks for characteristics such as content knowledge, organizational skills, leadership skills, and being a team player. He also indicated that he asks questions during the interview that will help him decide if the teacher candidate really likes working with children.

Adam's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

Best Candidate
Background Knowledge
Teach Using Life Experiences

Principal Craig

Principal Craig has six years of administrative experience, and currently holds a position as a principal in a rural high school. Principal Craig has a total of seventy-three teachers and two of them received certification through the GA TAPP program. The two teachers teach in mathematics and science. While at his current high school, he has not hired any GA TAPP teachers. As an assistant principal at an urban school, he recommended five GA TAPP teachers for teaching positions. When asked why he hired GA TAPP teachers, Principal Craig stated that “the GA TAPP teachers are not the kind of folks that I actively go recruit unless I just know them, and I have seen their work. They are not somebody I am going to go pick first.” His school district recruits teachers using the Teach Georgia website. Principal Craig was also asked during the interview about the qualities that he is looking for when considering to hire a teacher candidate, and he indicated the following:

When I go through Teach Georgia applications, the first thing I look for is certification. I want to know right now who I am working with. Am I working with a certified person or not. I will not say that certification will not preclude me from talking to someone and it is not a deal breaker, but it is one of my baselines that I [use]. If you are already interviewing for a job, and you don't have certification, it is a hurdle to overcome

whether it is through alternative type licensing or through a more traditional MAT program or something like that...

Your good folks aren't actively looking for a job. I don't mean to sound ugly because of that. Usually the folks that are actively looking for a job are the ones that can't keep one, and they are usually the ones that are filling up your Teach Georgia accounts. The good ones (teachers), somebody is trying to hold on to them, and so it is our job to go out and try to convince them to come to our school. My role is to try and put out as many feelers as I can, and I spearhead the entire process.

Craig's Reason for Hiring GA TAPP Teachers

Certification
Know the Teacher
Observed the Teachers'
Performance

Impact of GA TAPP Teachers

Each participant had their rationale for hiring a teacher candidate to work at their school. The common theme for hiring the teachers who received their certification through the alternatively prepared program is expressed at the end of each synopsis. In Table 4.3, the researcher summarized the reasons the principals hired alternatively prepared teachers. The number of participants who shared the same reason for hiring alternatively prepared teachers is also represented (see Table 4.3). Limited qualified candidate and best candidate were combined in the results summarized in Table 4.3. Also, background knowledge and teaching using life experiences were also combined in the results in Table 4.3. In Table 4.3, the researcher did not

include the principals' overall reasons for hiring an applicant or a teacher candidate when making hiring decisions, but only included the characteristics of alternatively prepared teachers.

Table 4.3

Reasons for Hiring Alternatively Prepared Teachers

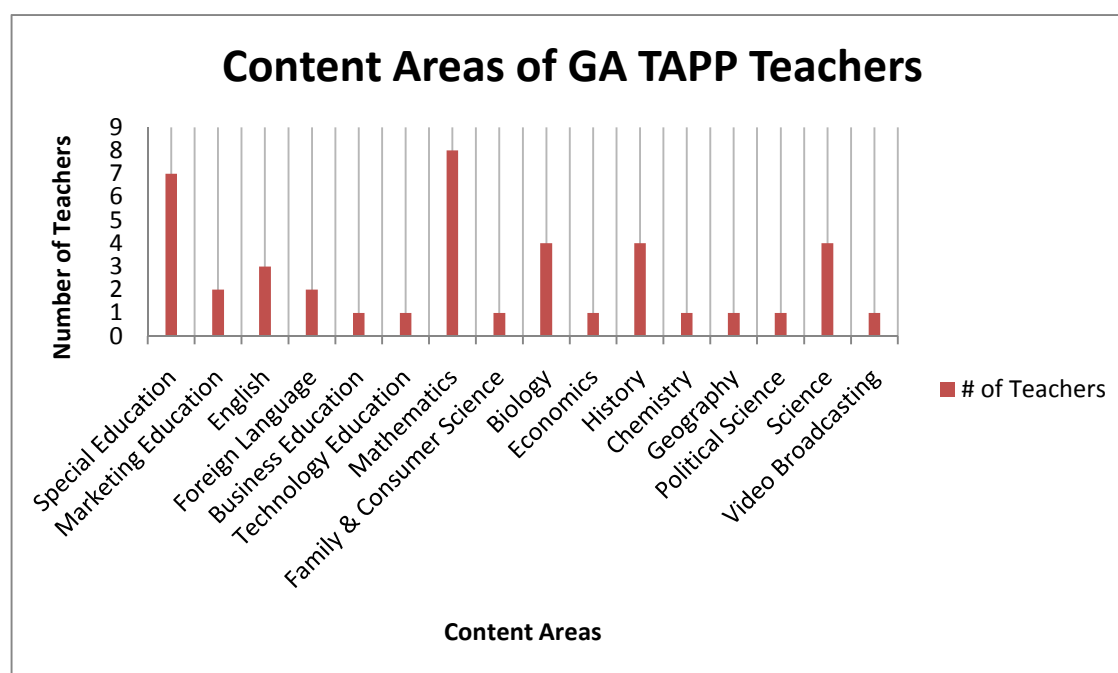
<i>Content of Coded Text</i>	<i>Number of Participants who shared this reason</i>
Teacher Shortage Area	3
Content Knowledge	3
Best Candidate	5
Life Experiences	3
Knew the Teacher	1
Observed the Teacher's Performance	1
Enthusiasm	1
Pedagogy Skills	2
Energy	1
Good Personality	1
Mixture of Teachers	1
Lower Socioeconomic Area	1

Although the participants indicated that no teacher shortages were evident at the time of this study, the researcher proceeded to identify the content areas in which alternatively prepared teachers were working in their schools. To identify the content areas in which GA TAPP teachers

teach, the participants identified the content areas in the demographic section after completing the semi-structured interview. The researcher noted the content areas identified in the demographic section in Table 4.4. Identifying the content areas in which the GA TAPP teachers teach will help establish the content areas GA TAPP teachers filled in the Middle Georgia area at the high school level. According to the principals' responses, most GA TAPP teachers were currently teaching in the areas of special education and mathematics (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Content Area of Alternatively Prepared Teachers



Demographic

The literature often credits alternatively prepared programs for attracting persons of color, males, and older teacher candidates in education (Nweke et al., 2004; Birkeland & Peske, 2004; Hendricks, 2010). The benefits of hiring more teacher candidates with diverse backgrounds are their understanding of cultural and societal needs the students have when entering the classroom. Through interview data, the benefits of increasing the teacher population

with more persons of color, males, and mature teacher candidates were not consistently reported in this study. Since in administration, Principal Adam has hired or worked with older males coming from the business sector. Principal John has worked with more Caucasian GA TAPP teachers, and most of the GA TAPP teachers were older. Principal Lisa's GA TAPP teachers were mainly young in their mid-twenties. She has hired and worked with a balance of male and female alternatively prepared teachers. Those teachers expressed to their students their desire to make their students' world better and set expectations of their performance in the classroom (Principal Lisa). Principal Craig stated that the alternatively prepared teachers that he has worked with range in age from twenty-three to twenty-six years of age. He considered this age group to be mature, and states that this age range is a strength to the alternatively prepared program because they have premeditated their reasons for going into education. The teachers were also described as mature minded in the decision making process, and have thought through their career decisions, unlike the traditionally prepared teachers (Principal Craig & Principal Adam).

Research sub- question two

How are alternatively prepared teachers performing in meeting their teaching duties?

When discussing the GA TAPP teachers' abilities to carry out their teaching duties, it is essential to discuss the teachers' time management skills. Time management skills are important to teachers during their first years of completing the GA TAPP program and while learning the skills necessary to conduct their teaching duties. Overwhelmingly, the principals in this study discussed the GA TAPP teachers' eagerness and disposition while performing their teaching duties.

Time Management

Time management was one of the themes that arose from the interview data. GA TAPP teachers have several preparation requirements that occupy their time. The teachers have to “jump over hurdles and hoops” which ends up being a distraction to the requirements of their teaching duties according to Principal Craig. The teachers are required to teach and at the same time “gain their credentials and teaching certification which may result to failure in their ability to properly plan their day (Principal Craig).” Sometimes, their teaching duties and their job performance suffer because of the requirements of the preparation program; such as observing at other schools and maintaining a portfolio and at the same time completing lesson plans, grading, teaching, assessing, and participating in other teacher duties. Principal John does not view the requirements of the GA TAPP program the same as Principal Craig. He states that having the activities imbedded into a preparation program is necessary and allows the teachers to apply the strategies they learn while they teach. Principal Dr. Dewayne shared his perspective on the requirements of the GA TAPP program when he stated,

I think the GA TAPP program itself has been pretty regimented with the visits that the folks from RESA make and the portfolio that they have put together. I also think the GA TAPP program is also beneficial in that it requires that these teachers go and visit other schools to get a different idea of what happens at different schools. Overall, I think that the preparation requirements have strengths and have been pretty structured from day one.

Teaching is a “profession that eats its young whether they be traditionally prepared or alternatively prepared (Principal Craig).” Principal Craig states that being a good planner is a problem for all teachers no matter what preparation program the teacher participated in.

Eagerness

“GA TAPP teacher have a desire to work in education (Principal John).” For example, traditionally prepared teachers have majored in education because they love history or love working with children in their youth group. “After graduating from college, they soon discover they do not necessary love kids (Principal Craig).” Principal Craig stated that the fact that most GA TAPP teachers are mature and had experience working in another field, their decision to work in education has been well considered. The older GA TAPP participants have a mature mind in the decision making and because of this the retention of those teachers are evident. GA TAPP teachers are receptive to learning different techniques to utilize in the classroom (Principal Adam). The GA TAPP teachers are eager to implement new strategies that they have learned through professional development such as differentiated instruction, learning focus, and standard based classroom techniques (Principal Kevin & Principal Adam).

Disposition

Principal John states that he has observed GA TAPP teachers at his school having difficulties with people skills. The GA TAPP teachers have difficulties with understanding the importance of building relationships with their colleagues. Teachers coming from the corporate world often work in their setting independently and often do not communicate with other adults (Principal John). Principal John described the GA TAPP teachers who isolate themselves as the weak ones, who leave education after their first year of teaching. He stated that the strong GA TAPP teachers are the teachers who stay in teaching and make improvement in working cohesively with their colleagues.

Principal Adam does not share the same perception as Principal John. He describes the GA TAPP teachers as more outgoing than traditionally prepared teachers he has supervised.

Traditionally prepared teachers are conservative whereas GA TAPP teachers do not have difficulties relating to the students as young adults. GA TAPP teachers tend to give their students more choices in the way they learn and interact in the classroom. GA TAPP teachers are not resistant to change, and they are motivated to work. Their work performance reveals that “they view having a job as a privilege rather than a right, so they do not mind going beyond the traditional school day and working with students in extracurricular activities and teaching after school tutorials for remediation (Principal John).” Principal Lisa also shared the same perception as Principal Adam when describing her experience with GA TAPP teachers. GA TAPP teachers have “a desire to get involved and are curious as well as creative when working with students. They want to be involved with the entire system of the school not just the particular area that they teach (Principal Lisa).”

The prior work experience also contributes to the disposition of the alternatively prepared teacher. If the teacher had a job that required them to work with individuals with disabilities such as a Home Health Care Provider, the alternatively prepared teacher usually has tolerance and has knowledge of how to work with students with disabilities (Principal Adam). “When someone transfers out of the workforce, their skills blend well with kids (Principal John).” The GA TAPP teachers are very passionate about working with education and learning how to use their prior experiences to help the students be successful (Principal Dr. Dewayne).

Research sub-question three

What challenges and benefits are evident in classroom management and instruction of alternatively prepared teachers?

Classroom management and instructional skills were among the major themes the principals expressed during their interviews as areas that alternatively prepared teachers need to

work on. Both aspects are critical in the success of a teacher. Classroom management skills were described as learned and practiced skills that teachers have to practice in order to become good at maintaining and predicting behaviors in the classroom. As the principals discussed their views of classroom management skills of GA TAPP teachers, the classroom management skills were associated with the teachers' ability to be organized and teach lessons that are tailored to the needs of all students in the classroom. In order to tailor to the needs of the students, the alternatively prepared teacher must have the knowledge of the curriculum and understand the learning process of students. In this section, the high school principals shared their experiences regarding alternatively prepared teachers at their schools.

Classroom Management

Classroom management skills are the main component that separates alternatively prepared teachers from traditionally prepared teachers (Principal Lisa & Principal Dr. Sharon). Alternatively prepared teachers "just do not know how to make kids do what they need to do without it looking like they are making them do it (Principal Lisa)." Principal Craig describes GA TAPP teachers' classroom management techniques as being "a trial by fire kind of thing." The teachers learn by making mistakes due to their lack of student teaching experience (Principal John). The teachers lack the training on how to develop a discipline plan and implementing the plan (Principal Adam). "Taking courses and learning classroom management techniques are not enough if you do not know what motivates children (Principal Dr. Sharon)." Textbooks often do not give clear scenarios of what typical classroom settings and behavioral issues that students have when entering the classroom, so new teachers do not know what to expect or know how to diffuse problem behaviors (Principal Lisa).

Principal Kevin states what he often observed during the first semester or first year:

The GA TAPP teachers do not know how to deal with the disruptive behavior or how to handle the disciplinary issues in the classroom. The teachers who lack classroom management skills often get into power struggles with students and often result in embarrassing them in front of their peers.

Traditionally prepared teachers have an advantage over the alternatively prepared teachers by participating in student teaching (Principal Lisa). When a teacher is prepared through the traditional route, the teacher learns the steps to go through to get the class settled through educational courses (Principal Kevin). The traditionally prepared teachers learn about bell ringers and standard-based classrooms through the educational courses and also have opportunities to implement these strategies during their practicum experiences (Principal Kevin). The lack of practicum experience in an alternative teacher preparation program requires the alternatively prepared teacher “to stand on their own two feet when making classroom management decisions (Principal Dr. Dewayne).”

The teacher is:

Just thrown into the wolves and they have to stand up and they don’t have an idea of what it is like and they make a lot of mistakes that they know they can’t make or they say I am not going to make that mistake again. But a lot of times a student teacher would have already made that mistake and gotten it out of the way. So it is trial by fire and unfortunately their fire is with live ammunition (Principal Dr. Dewayne).

The number one reason GA TAPP teachers have classroom management problems are not because they can’t hold authority over teenagers; it is because they have a very poor way of designing their lessons (Principal Craig). The alternatively prepared teachers’ class management skills and instructional skills supersede each other (Principal Craig). If the teacher lacks the

ability to plan instructional activities that keep the students actively engaged, class management problems occur (Principal Craig).

Instructional skills

The common theme of the alternatively prepared teachers' instructional performance was the lack of pedagogical skills. GA TAPP teachers have background knowledge about the content area in which they teach, and can bring real-life application to the classroom to make the topic relevant to the students (Principal Kevin). One disadvantage, expressed during the interview with Principal John, the GA TAPP teachers have is when they enter a classroom setting, most of the time it is their first time delivering a lesson. The teachers have difficulties teaching bell to bell or having enough activities to keep the students busy the entire class period (Principal John) and optimizing the instructional time (Principal Kevin). The GA TAPP teacher tends to teach above the students' [cognitive ability] and have a hard time breaking it down (Principal Adam).

Although Principal John views having content knowledge as strengths for GA TAPP teachers, Principal Marissa states that "some people come into [teaching] not understanding what teaching really is." Principal Marissa noted that traditionally prepared teachers also experience that same misconception, but it is found frequently with alternatively prepared teachers. She indicated that even though she has that opinion about alternatively prepared teachers, she has also had excellent experience with GA TAPP teachers' instructional capabilities.

Curriculum Knowledge

Shulman's (1986) identifies curriculum knowledge as the "awareness of how topics are arranged both within a school year and over longer periods of time and ways of using curriculum resources, such as textbooks, to organize a program of study for students (p. 13)." According to Principal Craig, the weaknesses alternatively prepared teachers have are:

Their ability to see a bigger picture of how the curriculum is mapped out. GA TAPP teachers have difficulties meeting the instructional needs of all learners, being able to present content material in multiple ways, and assessing children in multiple ways.

Although I do think the alternative licensing programs have caught up a little more than [traditional preparation programs] with what the research says about differentiated instruction in the classroom.... No matter what the teachers' preparation routes were....

The teachers are not going to be judged by how well they work with the valedictorian, [but] they are going to be judged on how well they teach the bottom 25%.... that is the mark of a good teacher.

Several other principals echoed the concern of the ability of alternatively prepared teachers to plan units, having the full knowledge of the curriculum, or their ability to teach bell-to bell (Principal Kevin, Principal John, Principal Adam, and Principal Lisa). According to Principal Lisa, once the new teachers gets over the “hump of understanding the Quality Core Curriculum, Performance Standards, or Career Technical Agriculture Education requirements they are able to organize their lessons to meaningful units. Organization is the key; you can be organized and the rest [curriculum planning] will fall into place (Principal Lisa).”

Research sub-question four

How are alternatively prepared teachers equipped with content knowledge to meet the needs of their students?

Content Knowledge

The high schools principals agreed that the GA TAPP teachers' content knowledge is impeccable (Principal Marissa, Principal John, Principal Kevin, and Principal Lisa). In this section, the principals noted the strengths associated with the content knowledge of a GA TAPP

teacher. Not only do GA TAPP teachers have the content knowledge that leads to effectively conveying the concepts being taught to their students, but the prior work experiences of those teachers has made a difference in the classroom. Principal Marissa describes her experience with GA TAPP teachers as follows:

They have a great knowledge in their content field. Sometimes they are a little weaker in the pedagogy part of it, and in the psychology part of the learner, but I think they are eager to have a chance to learn how to present their content knowledge to meet the diverse learners in the classroom.

Life Experiences

Many GA TAPP teachers bring vast talents into the field in which they are teaching through real-life experiences (Principal Adam). Teachers having worked in the corporate world makes a big difference when teaching different content associated with business education. GA TAPP teachers put relevance in what the students are learning, and the teachers are able to give examples on how to apply it to real-world experiences (Principal John). They have relationships with outside agencies that often allow opportunities for job shadowing, presenters, and hands on activities that teachers can use to reinforce what they are teaching (Principal Kevin).

Alternatively prepared teachers “bring their expertise to make a young person’s life better (Principal Lisa).”

Principal Adam states:

Content is a big strength for GA TAPP teachers. A lot of times these people are content mostly. They are able to relay the content to actual working force or using the information being taught to working a real job. They are able to actually share with the

students how to use the content being taught to practical situations and their experience of various life situations that caused them to change careers.

Proponents of GA TAPP Teachers

Responses from interview questions reveal various impacts alternatively prepared teachers had on high schools located in the Middle Georgia area. The principals indicated several strengths that alternatively prepared teachers have contributed to their schools. Seven out of eight principals were proponents of hiring alternatively prepared teachers, and noted how the GA TAPP teachers' contributions impacted the students they teach. One high school principal was an opponent of hiring alternatively prepared teachers, unless he had knowledge of their work performance before offering a job. Although the principal was an opponent of hiring alternatively prepared teachers, he expressed strengths that he observed when working with alternatively prepared teachers at his school.

Principal Lisa is a proponent of the GATAPP program, and has had good experiences in working with teachers from the alternative teacher preparation program. She believes:

The strength to getting good GATAPP teachers is like getting any good teachers. You have to have different sets of eyes evaluating the responses of a teacher candidate before you hire them. You have to get different opinions involved in it. You have to find a way to pull their personality out during the interview. Because personality, I think, carries a lot of weight. You carry that personality into the classroom and if you have a giving spirit usually you make a good teacher. If you don't, you don't make a good teacher. Overall, I think it is really important for us (administrators) to be able to look at people regardless of what their preparation is and find out what their personality style is and see if they will

fit your school climate, goals and mission... GA TAPP teachers are an investment to my school, and I am willing to make the investment needed for those teachers.

Principal Dr. Sharon is a proponent for GA TAPP program. She has seen many great qualities of the alternatively prepared teachers with whom she has worked and with whom she currently works. The qualities that were consistent throughout her interview were patience, determination, and consistency. Principal Dr. Sharon also described her encounters when observing the teachers instructional abilities in the classroom...

I can recall one observation when the alternatively prepared teacher was teaching a lesson in a Money Management class. The teacher was previously a car salesman at a car dealership, and decided to participate in the GA TAPP program. It was truly amazing what the teacher was sharing with the students in his classroom. The teacher even taught me some important tips to consider when purchasing a car. The students were actively engaged, and he provided various scenarios that the students had to apply to what they had learned in the classroom. I believe that content knowledge and real-life application are essentials that the students need in order to promote rigor and higher order thinking. Principal Dr. Sharon also expressed her willingness to invest in hiring teachers who received their certification through the alternative teacher preparation program because "they are indeed an asset to my school." Principal Dr. Sharon suggested that the GA TAPP program providers focus on incorporating in their preparation courses information on the educational policies and the code of ethics due to the noted areas of weaknesses in that area. "The GA TAPP teachers lack the understanding of educational process such as procedures, guidelines, laws, and how to conduct parent-teacher conferences." Principal Dr. Sharon stated that even though "the GA

TAPP teachers have weaknesses in classroom management and educational procedures; she has experienced overall success when working with GA TAPP teachers.”

Principal Kevin also echoed the importance of the GA TAPP teachers’ prior work experiences had when working with students at his school. He stated that their backgrounds make a big difference. GA TAPP teachers “have more of tolerance and ability to know what to do with the students who need more practical experiences to learn the concept than [traditionally prepared] teachers.” Principal Kevin is a proponent of the contributions GA TAPP teachers have made at his school. He stated that although they have difficulties with classroom management and curriculum knowledge, after the first semester, “the GA TAPP teacher that really has a desire to teach, they also have the desire to learn what it takes.”

Principal John participated in the alternative teacher preparation program. He revealed during the interview that he obtained his leadership skills because of participating in the alternative teacher preparation program. He stated that he does not believe he would have obtained his leadership abilities if he had participated in a traditional preparation program. “Traditional preparation programs focus on the psychological aspect of teaching and not what is needed to enhance their pedagogical skills, their content knowledge, and their leadership skills.”

Principal Dr. Dewayne is a proponent for the GATAPP program. During the semi-structured interview, Principal Dr. Dewayne stated:

The GA TAPP program has been good for the school system because a few years back, I felt like we were in a shortage of teachers. That is not the case now; there is an over abundance of teachers now due to the hiring freeze.

Opponent of GA TAPP Teachers

During the first implementation of GA TAPP program, Principal Marissa was completely against the idea of people receiving certification through the alternative teacher preparation program. Once she had experience with working with GA TAPP teachers, her perception changed:

The teacher quality that you get with GA TAPP teachers are the same quality that you get with traditionally prepared teachers. The [preparation of the teacher] is just a different route to the same thing. The major difference is that they have not student taught before, and they do not know a lot about pedagogy to begin with, but they learn that just like all pre-service teachers the first three years of teaching.

Principal Craig does not share the same perception of GA TAPP teachers. He is an opponent of the GA TAPP program according to his responses during the interview:

GA TAPP teachers are not one of the first kinds of folks that I actively go and recruit unless I just know them and I have seen their work. One reason that I do not usually hire GA TAPP teachers, I think that they have a lot of requirement to do. It is not an easy thing to do. I have seen the portfolios and all the observation requirements. If you didn't get certifications from a traditional preparation program, a lot of times when you go through the GA TAPP program, the (teacher candidate) kind of wish they would have. The teacher candidates are trying to teach and at the same time trying to gain the credentials and certifications that go with it.

Summary

Teachers from the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy have made an impact on high schools located in the Middle Georgia area. Through interview data, the high

schools principals shared rationale for hiring alternatively prepared teachers. Most teachers were hired based on their content knowledge and them being the best candidate for the job.

Alternatively prepared teachers have also filled the classroom in various content areas. The content areas used in this study were based on the areas identified through the RESA program. Most GA TAPP teachers teach in areas of mathematics and special education. GA TAPP teachers also filled teaching positions in the career technical area. According to high school principals in this study, the GA TAPP teachers were neither young nor old when entering into education. The consensus of most of the high school principals was that the GA TAPP teachers were old enough to make decisions about whether they wanted to teach and remained in the profession because of those mature career decision. Further discussion of the conclusions made from this study organized by research questions will be discussed in Chapter V. Implications for practice and recommendations for further research are also included.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a discussion of the study and to present discussions and conclusions drawn from the findings discussed in Chapter IV. Additionally, recommendations for further study are made and implications are presented.

Overview of the Study

This study was intended to expand upon the current research on the performance of alternatively prepared teachers in Georgia. According to the literature, by the year 2012, Georgia will need more teachers due to the increase in student enrollment and the requirements of class sizes (Afolabi et al., 2008). In Georgia, alternative teacher preparation programs were developed to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, and to increase the number of talented teachers in the elementary and secondary levels (see Appendix A). The purpose of this research was to understand the perceptions of high school principals on the impact of alternatively prepared teachers in the Middle Georgia Area. The following sub-questions guided the overarching questions:

1. How do teachers who are prepared through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy meet teacher shortage areas in the Middle Georgia area?
2. How are alternatively prepared teachers performing in meeting their teaching duties?
3. What challenges and benefits are evident in classroom management and instruction of alternatively prepared teachers?
4. How are alternatively prepared teachers equipped with content knowledge to meet the needs of their students?

Individual interviews were conducted with eight high school principals located in the Middle Georgia area. Five of the high school principals were persons of color and three of the high school principals were Caucasian. Of the eight high school principals, five were males and three were females. Each regional area was represented in the study. Four high schools were located in the rural area; two high schools were located in the suburban area; and two high schools were located in the urban area.

The interviews were conducted at the school of each principal. These interviews were conducted using semi-structured questions developed from the literature. The researcher conducted a basic qualitative study. The qualitative method allowed for the emergence of details and descriptions of events. The participants were asked ten questions in order to obtain their perceptions on the GA TAPP teachers' instructional performances, classroom management skills, and their content knowledge. Each participant completed a demographic section to identify the areas in which the GA TAPP teachers teach, the number of GA TAPP teachers they have at their schools, and if they are currently experiencing any teacher shortages. The interviews were audiotaped and the interview data were obtained during the month of April. The audiotapes were transcribed by a professional transcriptionist, and the identity of the participants remained confidential. Confidentiality was maintained because each tape was labeled using the fictitious name provided by the researcher.

Discussion of Research Findings

A discussion of research findings as they related to each research questions is presented as follows:

Research sub-question one. How do teachers who are prepared through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy meet teacher shortage areas in the Middle Georgia area?

To answer this question, the researcher asked a series of questions relating to the hiring practices of each principal, reasons for hiring alternatively prepared teachers, how many alternatively prepared teachers they have hired while a principal, and how they feel about hiring teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs. These questions were asked during the interview process. The researcher wanted to identify what characteristics alternatively prepared teachers have that influenced the principals to hire them for a teaching position. The principals also answered questions at the end of each interview in the demographic section. The researcher wanted to obtain knowledge of the location of the school, what content areas the alternatively prepared teacher teach, and if the principal was experiencing any teacher shortage areas at the time of the study. Findings of the study indicate that more GA TAPP teachers teach in the areas of special education and mathematics. Special Education and Mathematics have been identified as critical content areas that school districts need more teachers (Gitomer et al., 1999; Jacob, 2007). This study also confirms that alternatively prepared teachers are teaching in the high demand content areas (Owings et al., 2006; Jacobson, 2005; Harvey & Gimbert, 2007). None of the schools indicated that they were currently experiencing a teacher shortage, but three principals indicated that they had experienced teacher shortages in specific content areas. Principal Dr. Sharon stated that special education, mathematics, and science were among the content areas that she had experienced a shortage of teachers. Principal Adam stated that he had experienced teacher shortages in the areas of biology, mathematics, and video broadcasting. Principal Dr. Dewayne stated that his school had expressed shortages of teachers before the economic crisis in Georgia in the areas of language arts, mathematics, geography, history, and special education. Consequently, the critical shortage teaching fields (secondary content areas, math, science, and special education) identified by the Board of Regents of Georgia were areas

identified by the principals in this study as teaching areas GA TAPP teachers are currently teaching in middle Georgia (Hendricks, 2010).

Teacher demand or teacher shortages are geographic, and the greatest needs for teachers are in urban and rural areas (Noble, 2008). In Zienteck's (2006) study, teachers were needed in rural and inner city schools. Even though no teacher shortage areas were noted in a specific geographic area, it is vital to note that the principals who indicated that they had experienced teacher shortages were located in suburban and rural areas. In this study, two of the principals who noted shortages in specific geographical and content areas were from the same school district.

The focus of this study was not on the particular demographics of the GA TAPP teachers, but through interview data, the principals indicated that the ages of the teachers of alternatively prepared teachers was a strength. Alternatively prepared teachers are older with prior work experiences (Braundard-Galayda, 2009; Noble, 2008). In previous research, the ages of the alternatively prepared teachers were associated with the maturity of the teacher when making the decision to go into teaching, and the retention rate of the teachers were associated with the age of the alternatively prepared teachers at their schools (Noble, 2008). In Noble's (2008) research study, the ages of the teachers were a factor of her study. Her study revealed that alternatively prepared teachers in the northwest area in Georgia were between the ages of 20 and 45. Principal Adam indicated that his alternatively prepared teachers were mostly males, but did not indicate the age ranges of the males. Principal Lisa and Principal Marissa stated that their GA TAPP teachers were mostly young, in their mid twenties. Principal Craig stated that most of his GA TAPP teachers were between the ages of 23 and 26. He described the GA TAPP teachers as mature minded and having thought through the decision making process to teach. Hendricks'

(2010) study revealed the comparison between the age of the teacher and the attrition rate. His study revealed that at least 30% of the older teachers in the Georgia area (ages 26 through 40) are currently teaching; however, 19% of the younger teachers in Georgia (age 25 or younger) are currently teaching (Hendricks, 2010). During the interviews with principals in this study, the benefits of increasing the teacher population with more people of color, males, and older teachers were not consistently reported.

Research sub-question two. How are alternatively prepared teachers performing in meeting their teaching duties? In order to answer this question, the researcher asked questions about the qualities or characteristics observed as the GA TAPP teachers carried out their teaching duties. Principals are often reluctant to hire teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs because of the amount of work the preparation programs require and the support the new teachers need during their first years of teaching (Noble, 2008). This perception was evident during the interview with Principal Craig. Principal Craig described the requirements of the alternatively preparation program as “the teachers jumping through hoops and hurdles.” Principal Dr. Dewayne did not share the same perception as Principal Craig relating to the requirements being one of the reasons alternatively prepared teachers have time management problems during their stages of preparation training. He describes the preparation requirements as being structured and identified them as strengths because the teachers are given opportunities and different instructional strategy opportunities to visit other schools to get an idea of what happens at different schools.

Eagerness

The ages of the alternatively prepared teachers were associated with the teachers’ desires to learn the craft needed to be successful in the classroom as well as making commitments to

work in difficult school environments (Braundard-Galayda, 2009). One of the themes identified is that the alternatively prepared teachers are eager. “GA TAPP teachers have a desire to work in education (Principal John).” The GA TAPP teachers’ work performances were described as receptive to learning different techniques to utilize in the classroom (Principal Adam). Also, the GA TAPP teachers are eager to implement new strategies that they have learned through professional development such as differentiated instruction, learning focus, and standard-based classroom techniques (Principal Kevin & Principal Adam). In the study, Principal Lisa described GA TAPP teachers as being involved with the total system of the school and not just in the areas that they teach.

Disposition

Professionalism refers to the disposition that a teacher must possess in order to be effective in the classroom. “It encompasses the areas such as collaboration with peers; administrators, and students; following policies and rules; handling situations with good judgment; providing and accepting feedback; and continuing professional development (Finn, 2009, p. 42).” The GA TAPP teachers have difficulties with understanding the importance of building relationships with their colleagues. Principal John gives a rationale for the teachers experiencing difficulties in this area; alternatively prepared teachers coming from the corporate world often work in their settings independently and often do not communicate with other adults (Principal John). The need to collaborate is not as important to alternatively prepared teachers (Noble, 2008). The teachers feel alone and often are so overwhelmed by the demands of teaching they do not have an opportunity to build the needed relationships to be a part of the school culture. Principal John described the GA TAPP teachers, who lack interpersonal skills, as the weak ones who leave education after their first year of teaching. He stated that the strong GA

TAPP teachers are the teachers who stay in teaching and make improvements in working cohesive with their colleagues. During the interviews, Principal Adam described GA TAPP teachers' dispositions as being outgoing, he described the traditionally [prepared] teachers as being conservative.

Research sub-question three. What challenges and benefits are evident in classroom management and instruction of alternatively prepared teachers? The development of classroom management skills allows the teachers a chance to develop a plan for eliminating the unpredictable behaviors that may occur in order to maximize the time spent on learning. Lack of classroom management can result in a portion of the day being lost to disruptions that cause late starts in lessons and difficulties during transitional periods (Bowen, 2004; Finn, 2009). In the study, the high school principals identified classroom management skills to be a weak area for GA TAPP teachers. Not having a discipline plan or clearly stating their expectations of students' behavior often impedes instructional time. Principal Adam makes correlations between the lack of having a discipline plan to the students exhibiting discipline problems in the classroom. Allen's (2005) research reaffirmed the need for teachers to develop classroom discipline plans to reduce the occurrence of classroom conflicts.

The findings of the study reveal similar results to previous literature which identifies the major weakness of alternatively prepared teachers as the inability to implement classroom management techniques to eliminate class disruptions. During the first year in the classroom, GA TAPP teachers do not know what to expect or know how to diffuse discipline problems (Noble, 2008). According to Allen's (2005) literature review, teachers' classroom management skills are not developed until after the first year of teaching. The GA TAPP teachers are usually implementing techniques that are considered "trial by fire" (Principal Craig), and unfortunately

their fire is with live ammunition (Principal Dr. Dewayne). According to the study, textbooks often do not give clear scenarios of typical classroom settings and how to deal with the behavior issues (Principal Lisa). Zienteck (2006) states that “there needs to be a stronger nexus between teacher preparation and the reality of the classroom (p. 53).” After the first years of teaching in the classroom, the alternatively prepared teacher obtain the strategies needed to diffuse the discipline problems in the classroom and optimize the learning opportunities in the classroom.

Student teaching or internships are incorporated into training traditionally prepared teachers. The views of the principals in this study suggest that student teaching experiences help prepare the new teachers’ development of classroom management skills, and the lack of student teaching experiences or internships contributed to the ineffective classroom management skills observed during the novice years of alternatively prepared teachers. Scarborough’s (2007) research, concurs with identifying the needs of alternatively prepared teachers during their first year of teaching. While being prepared and receiving on-the-job training, alternatively prepared teachers need the effective strategies modeled through classroom observation in order to gain the understanding of how to address the need of diverse learners in the classroom. Subsequently, Allen’s (2005) literature review reveals that traditionally prepared teachers felt unprepared for resolving class disruptions as compared to beginning teachers. “Learning while doing seems to be the norm” for obtaining classroom management techniques (Allen, 2005, p. 13). Conclusively, both alternatively prepared teachers and traditionally prepared teachers have difficulties with managing students’ behavior in the classroom.

Instructional Skills

Not only do student teaching experiences help teachers develop classroom management skills, but lend opportunities to develop pedagogical skills (Braundard-Galayda, 2009). Teachers

have supervised instruction on how context makes a difference in their choice of activities and strategies to use to teach a concept (Braundard-Galayda, 2009). The finding in this study reveals that alternatively prepared teachers' instructional performance was considered a weakness due to the lack of training in pedagogical skills. According to Principal Marissa, GA TAPP teachers are "a little weak in the pedagogy part and the psychological part of the learner."

Shulman (1987) explains:

Pedagogical content knowledge identifies the distinctive bodies of knowledge for teaching. It represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction (p. 4).

Principal John indicated during the interview that the teachers often enter in the classroom setting with it being the first time teaching a lesson.

"Learning styles, cultural and societal differences factors may affect learning which in turn affects time on task and the likelihood for inappropriate behavior (Allen, 2005, p. 25)." GA TAPP teachers were described as having a disadvantage when teaching the content that they know to students who are diverse learners. Due to lack of student teaching experiences, the GA TAPP teachers have difficulties breaking down the material so the students can understand what is being taught (Principal Adam). Echoed by a comparison study of beginning teachers from alternative teacher preparation programs and traditional preparation program, the beginning teachers expressed their concerns regarding implementing lessons to meet the needs of diverse learners and how to implement differential instruction for diverse learners (Noble, 2008).

According to the Conceptual Framework of GA TAPP program providers of Middle Georgia RESA:

- Every educator candidate should be prepared to recognize the diversity that each learner brings to the education process and modify the learning environment to accommodate:
- Values and culture of the learner
- Individual learning styles
- Personal experiences and realities (Moore, 2009, p. 1).

Subsequently, the information provided in this study suggests that the teachers are missing key elements when implementing lessons to diverse learning styles of the students.

Curriculum Knowledge

According to the study, principals shared concerns of alternatively prepared teachers' abilities to plan units, having the full knowledge of the curriculum, or their abilities to teach bell-to-bell as beginning teachers (Principal Craig & Principal Kevin). Principal Dr. Dewayne states that the requirements of student teaching puts alternatively prepared teachers at a disadvantage when learning how to carry out their teaching duties. He proceeded to state that traditionally prepared teachers already have made some of the mistakes that the alternatively prepared are making in the classroom. In Costelloe's (2008) literature review, the opponents of alternatively prepared teachers blame the preparation programs' lack of offering student teaching opportunities and method courses to the mistakes that the teachers make when entering the classroom. During Principal Marissa's interview, she stated that alternatively prepared teachers are not aware of what teaching really is, and they enter the classroom with 28 students which may result in them being overwhelmed or unprepared for their teaching responsibilities. The findings of this study concur with Costelloe's (2008) literature review, "there is little research that supports the most effective ways for teachers to learn how to teach (p. 20)." Content knowledge is not enough when delivering the curriculum to diverse learners (Costelloe, 2008).

Having the knowledge of how the curriculum is outlined helps the teacher in deciding what prerequisite skills the students need to learn and what concepts need to be taught in order to provide meaningful connection between each lesson. During the interview with Principal Lisa, she concurs that once the new teachers get over the “hump of understanding the Quality Core Curriculum, Georgia Performance Standards, or CTAE requirements they are able to organize their lessons to meaningful units.” The teacher is able to map out the curriculum and develop activities that actively engage the students. Alternatively prepared teachers have weaknesses in curriculum planning at the beginning of their teaching careers, but the teachers learn how to curriculum plan through various teaching experiences and collaboration with colleagues. Being able to organize the activities of the content being taught aids with curriculum mapping and the various distractions that may occur when students’ are not engaged in the learning. Bowen (2004) concurs that organization is essential and that organization helps prevent unpredictable behaviors and minimize the need of repetition of classroom routines.

Research sub-question four. How are alternatively prepared teachers equipped with content knowledge to meet the needs of their students? The findings in this study reveal that alternatively prepared teachers were very knowledgeable about their content areas; however, the major concern was being able to use a variety of instructional strategies appropriately to meet the needs of all learners. When teachers are knowledgeable about the content, they have the necessary skills to identify the needed prerequisite skills to learn the new concept. They are aware of the difficulty of the content being presented which helps them come up multiple strategies and activities to meet the needs of the diverse learners (Costelloe, 2008). In order to ensure success of students, teachers need to be aware of how students learn and the prior

knowledge students have about the content to make meaningful connections between new information and prior knowledge of the students (Finn, 2009).

In identifying the students' prior knowledge, the teacher needs to be aware of students' cultural exposure to various topics. Teachers who have the same ethnic backgrounds as the students have a greater understanding of students' cultural development (Zienteck, 2006). Being aware of the students' cultural and societal environments helps the teacher to understand how to approach diverse learners and understand how their backgrounds have an effect on how they learn (Finn, 2009). Teachers have to adapt their instructional strategies to fit the exposure of their students' life experiences (Finn, 2009).

Life Experiences

Prior work experience did not make a significant difference in teachers' preparedness, but the age of the teacher and the length of employment in the cooperate world contributes to the real-world application shared in the classroom (Zienteck, 2006). The life experiences of alternatively prepared teachers provide an opportunity for class discussions and enrich the lessons being taught to the students (Bowen, 2004). The findings in this study reflect the current literature. Having life experiences is essential to developing lessons that are practical and gives exposure to real life situations (Principal Adam & Principal Dr. Sharon).

Summarization of Discussion

GA TAPP teachers are hired due to their content knowledge and being the best qualified teachers. All but one principal indicated that they do not prefer hiring alternatively prepared teachers. The one principal, Principal Craig, stated that he would hire a GA TAPP teacher, but he prefers to have knowledge of the type of teacher he is hiring and their work performance before offering a job at his school if they are an alternatively prepared teacher. According to Principal

Craig's interview statements, he has had a wealth of applicants seeking job opportunities at his school, so he is very selective during the hiring process.

The results of this study provide empirical support for the existing research on the impact of alternatively prepared teachers, the way teachers receive certification, and the education reform of preparation programs. The researcher needs to acknowledge the state of the economy which had an adverse effect on establishing the demand of alternatively prepared teachers meeting the need of shortage areas in the Middle Georgia area. The researcher obtained data of the number of teachers who are currently participating in the GA TAPP program at the time of the study from personal communication with a RESA GA TAPP administrator assistant (see Appendix K). The number of participants has declined from previous years when school districts were not experiencing budget cuts. The budget cuts consist of school districts implementing a Reduction in Force (RIF) (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d.). As a result of RIF, over one hundred teachers have been terminated and are in need of employment at other school districts or other states. The maximum class size has increased as a result of budget cuts. School systems have a surplus of teachers due to the economic status, and they need to reduce the budget in the state of Georgia; therefore, the shortage of teachers was not evident in Georgia at the time of this study.

Also, the lack of participation in this study of high school principals or school districts may be a result of the changes that will occur in school districts located in the Middle Georgia area. Three out of the seven school districts will have new superintendents in the upcoming year. Three high school principals will be replaced next school year in one of the school districts represented in this study. Middle Georgia school districts are going through a transitional period during the time of the study. It is essential to note the changes that are occurring in the school

district being studied to explain the rationale of the principals not participating in the study. The researcher obtained a representative sample of the high school principals represented in the Middle Georgia area.

Implications for Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs

“Key to effective teaching is the knowledge of the structure of the content, how it is structured, and what its fundamental concepts are as well as how to best embody these in an instructional approach that can be understood by learners at different ages and stages (Finn, 2009, p. 48).” It is clearly evident through the responses of the participants that alternatively prepared teachers need instructional support during their first three years of teaching. In the study, the teachers were described as learning by fire at the sake of children. In Hall’s (2008) study, the alternatively prepared teachers who participated in the study indicated that they received more valuable instructional techniques from watching experienced teachers than by being taught in preparation courses what effective teaching practices are or look like in the classroom. Based on the results of the study, the opportunities to observe at different schools should continue as a preparation requirement.

Content knowledge is not enough; teachers must have an understanding of the learning stages and the content in which they teach (Finn, 2009). A balance of both content knowledge and pedagogical skills is essential to improve student achievement (Finn, 2009). Teachers are receiving training in working with diverse learning styles of students according to the goals listed in the Conceptual Framework of the GA TAPP program, but it is evident in this study that the teachers are having difficulties in planning lessons for the diverse needs of their students. The principals in this study also noted that the teachers have a hard time breaking down the material in order for all students to master the concept. According to the identified areas of improvement,

the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy program may need to incorporate more training in curriculum planning, unit lesson planning, and developing instructional calendars in order to meet the needs of beginning teachers who are receive certification through the alternative preparation program.

Implications for Principals

Principals have several obligations to help support the new teachers as they develop their professional maturity. Principals need to allow opportunities for the alternatively prepared teachers to observe effective teaching practices from veteran teachers. The new teachers need to have opportunities to implement their strategies in the classroom with support from their mentors and receive feedback both summative and formative of their instructional performance.

According to the principals in this study, GA TAPP teachers' instructional performances and classroom management skills develop during the first three years of teaching. Principals need to make sure that they provide the needed support to the beginning GA TAPP teachers in order for them to develop as effective teachers (Grossman & Loeb, 2008). At schools with induction plans in place, the alternatively prepared teachers will learn the needed skills to be successful in the classroom. According to Braundard-Galayda's (2009) literature review, induction is defined as follows:

Induction is the process of systematically training and supporting new teachers beginning before the first day of school and continuing through the first two or three years of teaching. Its purposes include, but are not limited to the following: 1) easing the transition into teaching, 2) improving teacher effectiveness through training in classroom management and effective teaching techniques, 3) promoting the district's culture-its

philosophies, mission, policies, procedures, and goals, and 4) increasing the retention rate for highly qualified teachers (p. 63).

Principals also need to be vigilant that teachers are more likely to remain in the profession if they work in schools with "integrated school culture," which they describe as school cultures that 1) facilitate interaction amongst faculty members across experience levels; 2) acknowledge the needs of beginning teachers; and 3) foster a sense of shared responsibility for the school and its students (Costelloe, 2008, p. 28).

Principals are responsible for making sure that the school is a safe learning environment. Principals are responsible for developing a school-wide discipline plan and making sure that teachers receive training in classroom management strategies. Principals also should educate their teachers on the policies and procedures that correlate with the school-wide discipline plan. Principals should be supportive and express their expectations of the students by holding the students accountable for their misbehavior (Allen, 2005).

Consequently, alternatively prepared teachers were described as being eager and willing to incorporate new strategies in the classrooms. Principals can expand on the teachers' desires to learn by incorporating modeling opportunities, observations, and training of research based strategies that have been proven to be effective in increasing student achievement during professional development opportunities. Principals need to offer the support that the teachers need to understand the educational jargons and policies and procedures that they may not have received during their preparation.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of the study suggest that further research is warranted in order to understand the impact alternatively prepared teachers have on education. The following recommendations are made for future studies:

- Future studies should include the perceptions, attitudes, and perspectives of GA TAPP teachers on the effectiveness of the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy program in meeting their needs in their novice years. During the interviews with the principals, they indicated that after the first semester or the first year the alternatively prepared teachers have learned the necessary skills to be effective teachers. This needs to be further investigated in order to provide the needed support for the alternatively prepared teachers by implementing training for the identified problem areas.
- A comparison of the benefits of student teaching opportunities of traditionally prepared teachers versus field experiences of alternatively prepared teachers on classroom management and instructional strategies development. In this study, student teaching was noted as a critical component to the traditional [preparation] programs. Student teaching was directly correlated to the opportunities for the teacher to learn classroom management skills, pedagogy skills, and curriculum development skills by trial and error while student teaching. The alternative preparation program implements a support team to assistance the teachers while completing his/her requirements, but it is evident that the alternatively prepared teachers are learning by trial and error through his/her field experience. Teachers from both preparation programs are learning the needed tools to become a teacher while being supervised by either the members of the support team during field experience or the classroom teacher during student teaching. The benefits of student teaching and field experiences need to be further investigated. In this study

the principals indicated after the alternatively prepared teachers first semester or first three years of teaching, the teacher is compatible in classroom management skills, pedagogy skills, and curriculum development skills.

- This study was performed in the Middle Georgia RESA area. The same study could be replicated in other regions or states.
- The formation of a longitudinal study of high school level GA TAPP teachers' impact in the Georgia area will reveal state-wide results of the impact of Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy teachers.
- In considering the impact of the economy in Georgia during the time of the study, a replication of this study should be considered once the economy improves.

Future research will be helpful in improving the preparation program for teachers if the focus of research moves away from looking at the variations and similarities of traditional and alternative teacher preparation program. Researchers need to identify the features of these programs on the impact of students' success (Grossman & Loeb, 2008). Future studies are needed to gain an understanding of alternatively prepared teachers' knowledge of classroom management skills as it relates to positive reinforcement, social reinforcement, and rules/policies. In this study, classroom management skills were considered to be an identified weak area of the alternatively prepared teachers. Future research needs to focus on the specific skills the alternatively prepared teachers have and lack in their classroom management skills.

Concluding Thoughts

Alternative Teacher Preparation Programs are a new way teacher candidates can receive certification in a specific content area. The preparation program requirements vary from state to state and from region to region. The rationale for developing an alternative teacher preparation

program is essentially recruiting talented individuals with life experiences to the education field. According to the literature, the common application requirements are that the teacher candidate does not have a degree in Education. The teacher candidate has a bachelor's degree in a related field that he/she is seeking to teach in. An evaluation of the teacher candidate's college transcripts and of passing a standardized assessment is an essential element that is considered during the application process. The teacher candidate who participates in alternative teacher preparation programs receives on-the-job training while teaching at a school. The on-the-job training usually is with the support of a mentor or some type of support team. The amount of time it takes the teacher candidate to complete the alternative teacher preparation program ranges from one to three years. The differences between alternative teacher preparation program and traditional preparation programs are:

- The time required to complete the preparation program is shorter than the traditional preparation program.
- The teacher receives certification when completing the alternative preparation program, and the teacher receives a degree when completing the traditional preparation program.
- The alternative preparation programs training are in universities/colleges, school districts, and RESAs; and traditional preparation programs training are in universities and colleges.

The literature of alternatively prepared teachers has credited the program in recruiting mature, males, and persons of color. The benefits expressed are that [persons of color] are “important because they tend to be more responsive to children's cultural backgrounds, they hold higher expectations for [students of color], and they tend to incorporate social reform into their teaching (Braungard-Galayda, 2009, p. 11).” The findings in this study revealed that one of the benefits of hiring alternatively prepared teachers is that they are mature in their decision to teach

unlike their counterparts. Strength is the eager and positive disposition of the teachers who are alternatively prepared. The teachers were described as being willing to learn and implement new strategies in the classroom. Content knowledge of the GA TAPP teachers described as being impeccable and the bonus is what they bring to teaching through their life experiences.

This study adds to the current literature on the impact of alternatively prepared teachers or the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Program has on education. It is the researchers' desire that this study be used to inform program providers and principals of the support needed by first year teachers in order to develop their teaching skills and classroom management skills. Classroom management skills were noted as a concentration area in which further research is needed to see if student teaching or field experiences help the teachers develop meaningful discipline strategies. The findings highlighted that alternatively prepared teachers have content knowledge and life experiences that contribute to implementing practical activities, but alternatively prepared teachers lack the pedagogical skills.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Georgia Classification Systems

Name of Program	Classification	
Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program/ Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy 2001	A	The alternative teacher certification route has been designed for the explicit purpose of attracting talented individuals who already have at least a bachelor's degree in a field other than education into elementary and secondary school teaching. The alternate route is not restricted to shortages, secondary grade levels or subject areas. These alternative teacher certification routes involve teaching with a trained mentor, and any formal instruction that deals with the theory and practice of teaching during the school year -- and sometimes in the summer before and/or after.
Post baccalaureate Non-Degree Preparation Programs 1950	D	These routes entail review of academic and professional background, and transcript analysis. They involve specially (individually) designed in-service and course-taking necessary to reach competencies required for certification, if applicable. An institution of higher education has major responsibility for program design.
Post baccalaureate Non-Degree Preparation Programs for Transitioning Military Personnel 1993	K	These avenues to certification accommodate specific populations for teaching, e.g., Teach for America, Troops to Teachers and college professors who want to teach in K-12 schools.
Teach for America 1989	K	Same as above
Master's Degree Level Initial Preparation 1993	E	These post-baccalaureate programs are implemented at an institution of higher education.
Permitted Personnel 1992	H	This class includes those routes that enable a person who has some "special" qualifications, such as a well-known author or Nobel prize winner, to teach certain subjects.

Note: From the National Center for Alternative Certification website on January 12, 2008.

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

Informant: _____

Place: _____

Date: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Tape Number: _____

Introductory Comments: I would like to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today.

The purpose of this interview is to gain an understanding of your views of the impact alternatively prepared teachers have made at your school. This interview will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes and will be tape recorded to insure the accuracy of your story. Your participation is voluntary and you may stop the interview at any time. All of your responses will remain confidential as will your identity and school district. If you agree to this interview and the tape recording, please sign this consent form. Please elaborate on specific details during the course of the interview. Please be honest, candid, and accurate as you respond to the questions.

Are there any questions regarding the conditions of this interview?

Interview questions:

1. What characteristics are you looking for when hiring a teacher candidate? SQ 1& 2
2. Can you describe your role in the hiring process? SQ1
3. How many years have you had experience with GA TAPP teachers? SQ 1
4. In the course of you being an administrator, how many GATAPP teachers have you hired?

SQ1

5. What are the main reasons for hiring GA TAPP teachers? How do you feel about hiring alternatively prepared teachers? SQ1
6. If any, what are the weaknesses you observed in GATAPP teachers? SQ 2, 3, &4
7. What qualities or strengths characterize GATAPP teachers? SQ 2, 3, &4
8. Describe GATAPP teacher's classroom management skills. SQ 3
9. Describe the GA TAPP performance instructionally. SQ 3
10. Is there any other information about the impact of alternatively prepared teachers, or any other information that you are willing to share?

Note: SQ means sub-question

APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please take a few minutes to complete the information below.

1. How many years of administrative experience do you have?

_____ 1-3 years

_____ 4-7 years

_____ 8- 11 years

_____ 12- 15 years

_____ 16- 20 years

_____ 21- 25 years

_____ 26- 30 years

_____ 31- 35 years

_____ More than 36 years

2. Approximately how many alternatively certified teachers do you currently have? _____

3. Approximately how many total teachers do you currently have? _____

4. Location of the school

_____ urban

_____ suburban

_____ rural

5. Do you now or have you evaluated alternatively prepared teachers?

_____ Yes

_____ No

6. If you have alternately prepared teachers in your school, indicate what subject area (s) do they teach?

_____ Art

_____ Health

_____ Music

_____ Foreign Language

_____ Special Education

_____ Physical Education

_____ Agriculture Education

_____ Business Education

_____ Marketing Education

_____ Technology Education

_____ English

_____ Mathematics

<input type="checkbox"/> Speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Family & Consumer Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry
<input type="checkbox"/> Economics	<input type="checkbox"/> Geography
<input type="checkbox"/> History	<input type="checkbox"/> Political Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Physics	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> indicate other areas that are not listed	

7. Do you have any teacher shortage areas, or have encountered any teacher shortages?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. What content areas have GA TAPP filled as a result of teacher shortage?

<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Health
<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Language
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology Education
<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Family & Consumer Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry
<input type="checkbox"/> Economics	<input type="checkbox"/> Geography
<input type="checkbox"/> History	<input type="checkbox"/> Political Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Physics	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> indicate other areas that are not listed	

APPENDIX D

LITERATURE MATRIX

Empirical Studies & Theoretical Sources	Interview Questions	Research Questions
1. Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, et al., 2004 2. Owings et al., 2006 3. Jacobson, 2005 Harvey & Gimbert, 2007 4. Stoddart & Floden, 1995 5. Dill, 1996	Do you have any teacher shortage areas, or have encountered any teacher shortages?	1
1. Mahatha, 2005 2. Guarino et al, 2006 3. Gantner, et al., 2006 4. Birkeland & Peske, 2004 5. McWhorter, 2005	What characteristics are you looking for when hiring a teacher candidate?	1 & 2
1. Mahatha, 2005	Can you describe your role in the hiring process?	1
1. Gantner, et al., 2006 2. Moran, 2005 3. Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, et al., 2004 4. Afolabi, Eads, & Nweke, 2008	How many years have you had experience with GA TAPP teachers?	1
1. Gantner, et al., 2006 2. Moran, 2005 3. Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, et al., 2004 4. Afolabi, Eads, & Nweke, 2008	In the course of you being an administrator, how many GATAPP teachers have you hired?	1
1. Gantner, et al., 2006 2. Moran, 2005 3. Nweke, Afolabi, Stewart, et al., 2004 4. Afolabi, Eads, & Nweke, 2008	What are the main reasons for hiring GA TAPP teachers? How do you feel about hiring alternatively prepared teachers?	1

1. Mahatha, 2005	If any, what are the weaknesses you observed in GATAPP teachers?	2 ,3, & 4
1. Chen, 2003	What qualities or strengths characterize GATAPP teachers?	2 ,3, & 4
1. Scarborough, 2007 2. Ritter & Hancock, 2007 3. Bowen, 2004 4. Kaplan & Owings, 2002 5. Mallard, 2004 6. Nagy, 2006 7. Noble, 2008 8. Walsh & Jacob, 2007 9. Salyer, 2003 10. Koller-Morris, 2002	Describe GATAPP teacher's classroom management skills.	3
1. Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, & et.al, 2005 2. Rubino et al, 1994 3. Nagy, 2006 4. Bowen, 2004 5. Noble, 2008 6. Walsh & Jacob, 2007 7. Salyer, 2003 8. Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2001	Describe the GA TAPP performance instructionally.	3

APPENDIX E**Letter to the Superintendent****COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY, AND HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT**

Dear Superintendent:

I am a doctoral student at Georgia Southern University. One of the degree requirements is the completion of a research study. Hence, I am asking you permission to conduct this study in your school district.

The research study is entitled *The Impact of Alternatively Prepared Teachers in Middle Georgia: Perceptions of High School Principals*. The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of high school principal in the Middle Georgia area. The study will seek to identify the shortage area that the teachers have filled who was prepared by the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GA TAPP). The principals will discuss their views of the teachers' performance in the classroom focusing on both strengths and weaknesses noted.

I am requesting to conduct audio taped interviews with high school principals in your district. There will be no involvement of students. The names of each informant, school, and school district will be assigned a pseudonym on the transcriptions and the research report.

Thank you for considering my request to conduct the study in your school district. I believe that the results of the study will be beneficial to your district and other school districts in the state. Please do not hesitate to contact me via telephone (478-284-5287), mail (PO Box 5222 Macon, GA 31208, or email (jmae255@aol.com).

Thanks in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jaquel LaFay Johnson
Georgia Southern University Doctoral Student

APPENDIX F

IRB APPROVAL

Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs		
Institutional Review Board (IRB)		
Phone: 912-478-0843		Veazey Hall 2021
		P.O. Box 8005
Fax: 912-478-0719	IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu	Statesboro, GA 30460

To: Jaquel Johnson
P.O. Box 5222
Macon, GA 31208

CC: Charles E. Patterson
Associate Vice President for Research

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Date: March 31, 2010

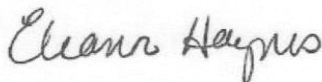
Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered **H10307** and titled "**The Impact of Alternatively Prepared Teachers in Middle Georgia: The Perceptions of High School Principals**", it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable. You are authorized to enroll up to **8** subjects.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol; you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, **whether or not it is believed to be related to the study**, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator **prior** to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a *Research Study Termination* form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

APPENDIX G

Letter to the Principal



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Dear High School Principal:

My name is Jaquel Johnson. I am a Special Education Department Chair for Houston County School District, and am a doctoral student at Georgia Southern University. Your school was selected because it is located in the Middle Georgia area. The purpose of this research is to identify the views of high school principals on the impact that teachers who are prepared by the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GA TAPP) have on their school. This data will be gathered by conducting audiotape 60 to 90 approximately minutes interviews with high school principals in the Middle Georgia area.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may withdraw from audiotape interview at anytime by notifying the principal investigator. If you do choose to withdraw, data will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, the information obtained in this study may be published or presented at conferences, but your identity will remain confidential.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement enclosed in this letter (two copies are enclose, one to sign and return and one for your records) and send it back in the self-addressed envelope to the principal investigator. If you choose not to participate in this study, send the letter back unsigned in the self-addressed envelope.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact me at (478) 284-5287. You may also contact me via email at Jaquel.Johnson@hcbe.net or JMAE255@aol.com. Additionally, you may contact my faculty advisor, Dr. Brenda Marina, at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia 30460 or via email at bmarina@georgiasouthern.edu. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant in this study, you may also contact the contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-478-0843. A copy of the results of this study will be available upon request.

Thank you for your assistance in this study in identifying the views of high school principals on the impact that teachers who are prepared by the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GA TAPP) have on school. The contribution of your time and expertise is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jaquel LaFay Johnson
Georgia Southern University Doctoral Student

AGREEMENT TO PARTICPATE

Print Name_____

School_____

Date(s) available for interview_____

Phone number where you can be reached_____

Best days and times to reach you_____

_____ Yes, I agree to participate in the study.

_____ No, I do not agree to participate in the study.

APPENDIX H

Informed Consent



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP, TECHNOLOGY, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

INFORMED CONSENT

Informant,

I, Jaquel Johnson, doctoral student at Georgia Southern University, am conducting this study entitled "*The Impact of Alternatively Prepared Teachers in Middle Georgia: The Perceptions of High School Principals.*" I would greatly appreciate your participation in this research as your input will contribute to the literature as I seek to understand the impact Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GA TAPP).

Participation in this research will include completion of an interview that will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. All interviews will be taped recorded and transcribed verbatim. A copy of the interview questions will be provided via email to each informant prior to the interview if requested. There are minimal discomforts and risks involved in this study and every effort will be made to make each informant as comfortable as possible.

Potential benefits for participation in this study are as follows. This study provides each informant with an opportunity to give an accurate, information-rich accounting of their perceptions of the impact of alternatively prepared teachers at their educational setting. This valuable insight is critical to increase the knowledge base about the contributions alternatively prepared teachers bring to the teaching profession. The study will also reveal the critical areas in which alternatively prepared teachers teach. This study will provide educators an opportunity to gain knowledge of the performance of alternatively prepared teachers in the classroom setting in the Middle Georgia area.

The duration of this study is approximately 12 months. Data collection will begin in April 2010. The information gathered will be kept strictly confidential. The names of each informant, school, and school district will be assigned a pseudonym on the transcriptions and the research report. The collected data will be stored in a locked file cabinet. Only the researchers and informants will have access to the data. The audiotapes/transcriptions will be destroyed after the study is completed, and, before publication. You have a right to ask questions and have those questions answered. If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact me via telephone (478-284-5287), mail (PO Box 5222 Macon, GA 31208, or email (jmae255@aol.com). For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at 912-478-0843.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. During the interview, you also do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to. You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in this research study. If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.

Title of Project: *The Impact of Alternatively Prepared Teachers in Middle Georgia: The Perceptions of High School Principals*

Principal Investigator:

Jaquel Johnson
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Macon, GA 31208
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Faculty Advisor:

Dr. Brenda Marina
Georgia Southern University
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Statesboro, GA 30460-8131
912.681.0510
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Participant Signature

Date

Investigator Signature

Date

APPENDIX I

The Framework for Teaching: Components of Professional Practice

CHARLOTTE DANIELSON

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Princeton, NJ 08540

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The *Framework for Teaching* is a research-based set of components of instruction, aligned to the (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) INTASC standards, and grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching. In this framework, the complex activity of teaching is divided into 22 components (and 76 smaller elements) clustered into four domains of teaching responsibility: planning and preparation (Domain 1), classroom environment (Domain 2), instruction (Domain 3), and professional responsibilities (Domain 4).

Domain 1: Planning and Preparation

Demonstrating Knowledge of Content
and Pedagogy
Demonstrating Knowledge of Students
Setting Instructional Outcomes
Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources
Designing Coherent Instruction
Designing Student Assessments

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

Reflecting on Teaching
Maintaining Accurate Records
Communicating with Families
Participating in a Professional
Community
Growing and Developing Professionally
Showing Professionalism

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

Creating an Environment of Respect and
Rapport
Establishing a Culture for Learning
Managing Classroom Procedures
Managing Student Behavior
Organizing Physical Space

Domain 3: Instruction

Communicating with Students
Using Questioning and Discussion
Techniques
Engaging Students in Learning
Using Assessment in Instruction
Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

Note: Adapted from Danielson, C. (2007), *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching*. Copyright 2007 by Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Reprinted with permission.

APPENDIX J

Middle Georgia RESA Conceptual Framework

Mission:

Middle Georgia RESA is committed to increasing student achievement and ensuring high performing schools.

Vision:

All Middle Georgia RESA systems and schools will make AYP.

Introduction:

The conceptual framework for Middle Georgia RESA is based upon a strong, unwavering commitment to quality, an organization and structure to achieve that quality, and the assessment and accountability of all components of the program. This framework embodies an appreciation of diversity, a commitment to research and its implication for practitioners, the infusion of technology, and the importance of rich field experiences and other types of support and collaboration among professionals.

The philosophical base of the Conceptual Framework will be developed through discussion of the mission, values, and beliefs and commitments. The conceptual framework is also based upon content and pedagogical standards, as well as upon this philosophical base.

Beliefs and Commitments:

Middle Georgia RESA supports the diverse needs of its systems by providing flexible, meaningful, cost-effective quality-based professional growth programs to improve/enhance educators' performance that will improve student learning:

1. We believe that an effective GaTAPP program provides:

- a) Highly specialized instruction to exceptional educators
- b) Unique opportunities to use advanced learning in real school situations
- c) Systematic process for candidate selection
- d) Planned field experiences with supervision
- e) Research-based, comprehensive content
- f) Interaction with other learners
- g) Exemplary instructors
- h) Delivery model based on diverse needs of systems
- i) Systematic program assessment

2. We believe every educator candidate should be prepared to recognize the diversity that each learner brings to the education process and modify the learning environment to accommodate:

- a) Values and culture of the learner
- b) Individual learning styles
- c) Personal experiences and realities

Commitment to Diversity	Evidence
The professional education unit's conceptual framework reflects the professional education unit's commitment to preparing candidates to support learning for all students and provides a conceptual understanding of how knowledge, dispositions, and skills related to diversity are integrated across the curriculum, instruction, field experiences, clinical practice, assessments and evaluations.	Diversity Verification Form Observations by Supervisors Formatted Lesson Plans (Portfolio) Essentials Training Exceptional Child Course Portfolio

3. We believe that GaTAPP programs should infuse appropriate technology into the instructional program by:

- a) Providing access to current research and world-wide resources
- b) Modeling by the instructor
- c) Training of the candidates by the instructor

Commitment to Technology	Evidence
The professional education unit's conceptual framework reflects the professional education unit's commitment to preparing candidates who are able to use educational technology to help all students learn; it also provides a conceptual understanding of how knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to	Data Analysis with Charts Use of eWalks Data Room Set-up Data-based Decisions Disaggregating Data Georgia Standards.org Integrating Technology GPB Videos tied to GPS Finding multiple data sources on GaDOE (Diversity Verification Form)

educational and information technology are integrated throughout the curriculum, instruction, field experiences, clinical practice, assessments and evaluations.	Use of GaOAS to see example of CRCT, EOCT, and GHSGT Smart Board Training Illuminate Sessions Qualitative and Quantitative Data collected on seminars Use of Clickers
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4. We believe instruction in an effective GaTAPP program incorporates and models:

- a) Respect for learner diversity
- b) Authentic assessment of the candidate's knowledge and skills
- c) Learning styles
- d) Multiple intelligences
- e) Self assessment of concepts and skills
- f) Real-world connections

5. We believe that instructors in an effective GaTAPP should be:

- a) Recruited from professionals having in-field or related experiences/expertise
- b) Selected according to specified criteria
- c) Retained based on evidence of positive impact on candidates' learning

6. We believe that GaTAPP candidates should be:

- a) Recruited from qualified professionals in specified areas
- b) Selected according to successful performance and program criteria
- c) Retained based on successful demonstration of assessment standards

7. We believe that decisions regarding policy and resources acquisition in an effective GaTAPP should be:

- a) Driven by the need to improve student learning
- b) Research-based and credible
- c) Collaborative and communicated
- d) Responsive to system needs
- e) Aligned to program standards

Coherence	Evidence
The professional education unit's conceptual framework provides a system for ensuring coherence among curriculum, instruction, field experiences, clinical practice and assessment across a candidate's preparation program.	Individual Induction Plans Data Board in RESA Office Special Ed Program Requirement Matrix Essentials Class Seminars Portfolio File Folders Mentors in same content area Candidate Support Team Members Candidate Support Team Meeting Forms eWalk Observations Focused Monitoring Standards-based Classrooms Co-teaching Survey Monkey

The question that has guided our planning is what content, types of formats, and contextual characteristics of this professional development are likely to yield positive results? (Gus key, 2000).

There is a strong element to modeling in our program.

Integral to our framework is Charlotte Danielson's framework for teacher competencies including planning, preparation, and instruction. The Framework for Teaching is a research-based set of components of instruction, aligned to the INTASC standards, and grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching (Danielson, 2007). This professional learning opportunity will provide the candidates with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards. Our goal is professional learning that improves the learning of all students (Georgia Standards for Professional Learning, 2006).

<p>Shared Vision</p> <p>The professional education unit's conceptual framework describes the vision and purpose of a professional education unit's efforts in preparing educators to work in P-12 schools. It is well articulated, knowledge-based, and consistent with the institution's/agency's mission.</p>	<p>Evidence</p> <p>The <u>Essentials Class</u> provides the candidates with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support and opportunities to engage all students in authentic learning • a pedagogical knowledge base and a pedagogical content knowledge base • research-based strategies for instruction, assessments, and technology • a time for reflection in order to change and grow • opportunities for collaboration and leadership. <p><u>Data</u> and AYP training.</p> <p><u>TAPP Informational PowerPoint</u> on www.mgresa.org.</p> <p><u>Pathways</u> of GaTAPP chart.</p>
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Other Guiding Principles of the GaTAPP Conceptual Framework:

While the conceptual framework for the GaTAPP Program is guided by the mission, beliefs, and principles (philosophical base) of Middle Georgia RESA, it is also based upon the following standards:

(1) the content standards from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and Georgia Rules for each content area affected, from the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) content standards, and from the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS)

(2) the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Development (INTASC) as identified and imbedded in the framework and rubrics for teacher performance developed by Charlotte Danielson for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in her work, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*.

The above principles and standards, along with The Core Propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and the dimensions of the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program, comprise the Conceptual Framework which undergirds all content and activities for the preparation program and for the assessment of the portfolio of the candidates to determine competence.

The following INTASC Standards form the umbrella of teaching competencies that Middle Georgia RESA is committed to developing in its GATAPP candidates:

INTASC Standards

1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.
2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and personal development.
3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge, of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
8. The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.
9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

Program Design

The GaTAPP program of study is organized into these transition points (phases):

1. Application Process/Pre-TAPP/Program Entry
2. Completion of Essentials of Teaching Coursework (introductory 80-hour course)

3. First Year Teaching

- a. Beginning of First Year Teaching
- b. End of First Year Teaching

4. Program Exit

5. Post-Program Exit

1. Application Process/Pre-TAPP*/Program Entry

*Pre-TAPP implies an individual who is taking the Essentials class even though there is no teaching position available for that person. Items A, B, and C apply to Pre-TAPP and TAPP Candidates. Item D is necessary for program entry.

A. Must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university

B. One of the following requirements must be met by the candidate: (1) A major in the content area in which the Clear Renewable Certificate is sought

OR

A related degree with at least these number of semester hours in the content area:

15 semester hours for middle school

21 semester hours for high school

OR

A passing score in the content area on a GACE or Praxis assessment

C. A Passing score on the GACE Basic Skills assessment, a Master's degree from an accredited college/university, or have high enough scores on the SAT, ACT, or GRE:

SAT Exemption Scores: Verbal 480; Math 520; or combined score of 1000

ACT Exemption Scores: English 21; Math 22; or combined score of 43

GRE Exemption Scores: Verbal 490; Quantitative 540; or combined score of 1030

D. Have been offered a full-time teaching position by one of the seven school systems served by Middle Georgia RESA

2. Completion of Essentials of Effective Teaching (introductory 80-hour course)

All TAPP candidates must complete an 80-hour class called "Essentials of Effective Teaching." For those TAPP candidates who begin in July, 48-64 hours are completed before school starts and the remaining hours are completed after school starts in the fall. The benefit here is to allow candidates to bring back to the "Essentials" class concerns or successes that have occurred in their classrooms.

A second “Essentials” class begins in January on the second day of the semester. This allows the systems to hire mid-year and immediately have the TAPP candidate in the required “Essentials” class. About half of the students in the January class are Pre-TAPP and some of them find employment while in the class. Being in the “Essentials” class allows them to step right in that position.

Absences are not allowed and make-up time is arranged between the professor and the student. The class is taught by a teacher who is Nationally Board Certified and who does trainings in our systems on Standards-based Instruction, Differentiation, Assessment, and The Elementary Academy.

Some of the items that the students must complete during the “Essentials” training include: an online pre and post survey, a unit lesson plan, observing and writing about an ethics video, a classroom management project, and a live teaching demonstration.

3a. Beginning of First Year Teaching

Every TAPP candidate will be assigned a Candidate Support Team consisting of: 1) a mentor assigned by the school, 2) a supervisor assigned by RESA, and 3) an administrator from their home school. If the mentor is not in the same content area as the candidate seeking certification, a content area specialist will also be assigned to the TAPP candidate.

Since candidates can finish anywhere from one to three years, Middle Georgia RESA has assigned three benchmarks per school year for completion of the program. Any candidate not completing the program at the end of the first year may choose one of the following benchmarks for their second and/or third year: November 3, March 3, June 3.

All candidates are given portfolios at a special seminar where all TAPP requirements are discussed. They are made aware of the 24 competencies necessary for exit, the dispositions form, field experiences and the accompanying diversity verification forms, the individual induction plan tailored to each candidate, and the seminar dates and requirements. (Note: these forms can be found online at www.mgresa.org under the TAPP button and in the Middle Georgia RESA Unit Report for GaTAPP.

3b. End of First Year Teaching

If the candidate has not completed all requirements of the program by the end of their first year, any remaining requirements will be listed on their CST Meeting form. The candidate will be required to continue in the program and will automatically be transitioned into a second year.

4. Program Exit

Candidates must meet all requirements of their Individual Induction Plan before completing this phase of the program.

Requirements:

- 1) All required GACE are passed.
- 2) All coursework is complete including the Special Georgia Requirements.
- 3) Ten seminars have been attended.
- 4) Ten journal entries were made.
- 5) Five field experiences in the appropriate grade band were made.
- 6) The portfolio is complete.
- 7) All 24 Exit Competencies have been met.
- 8) Dispositions have been met with 3 or higher.

Upon program completion, candidates will be recommended for their clear-renewable certificate during their final CST Meeting. Recommendation must be made by the candidate's Administrator. The Mentor and Supervisor must sign off in agreement.

5. Post-Program Exit

At the present time there is no follow up for program completers. Middle Georgia RESA is currently working with Jackie McCann, Technology Specialist on possible instruments which would track their progress.

24 Exit Competencies

The GaTAPP candidate must meet these 24 competencies in order to exit the program and receive clear-renewable certification.

I. Planning and Preparation

1. The teacher demonstrates solid knowledge of content, of connections and prerequisite relationships, of content-related pedagogy and of connections with technology.

2. The teacher demonstrates a working knowledge of age-group characteristics, of different students' approaches to learning, of students' skills and knowledge levels, and of students' interests and cultural heritage.
3. The teacher demonstrates an appreciation of the diversity of the students, the staff, and the community and capitalizes on the richness of that diversity.
4. The teacher selects goals that are valuable, clear, suitable for diverse students, and balanced among types of learning.
5. The teacher actively seeks and utilizes varied instructional materials and community resources, including technology, to enhance teaching and learning.
6. The teacher's instructional plans are coherent and structured in that learning activities, resources, groupings, and time allocations are varied and suitable to the students and to the instructional goals.
7. The teacher utilizes varied assessment methods, including those through technology, that are congruent with the goals for learning; students understand the criteria and standards; and the teacher utilizes assessment results to plan for and differentiate instruction.

II. The Classroom Environment

8. Teacher/student interactions and student/student interactions are friendly, warm, caring, polite, respectful, and developmentally and culturally appropriate..
9. The teacher establishes a culture of learning where students are committed to the value of the subject, accept the teacher's high expectations, and take pride in quality work and conduct.
10. The teacher effectively manages instructional groups, transitions, materials, supplies, non-instructional duties, and supervision of volunteers and paraprofessionals.
11. The teacher makes standards of conduct clear, is consistently alert to student behavior, and responds appropriately, respectfully, and successfully to student behavior.
12. The teacher arranges the classroom and organizes physical space and materials skillfully, resourcefully, and with safety in mind.

III. Instruction

13. The teacher's directions, procedures, and oral and written language are communicated clearly and accurately.
14. The teacher's questions and discussion techniques are of high quality and engage all students.
15. The teacher utilizes engaging and varied representations of content, instructional strategies, assessment techniques, activities, assignments, technology, grouping configurations, materials and resources, structure and pacing..

- 16. The teacher's feedback to students is consistently high quality and in a timely manner.
- 17. The teacher demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness by adjusting lessons, responding to students, and being persistent.
- 18. The teacher accurately assesses lessons' effectiveness and demonstrates an understanding of how to modify subsequent lessons.

IV. Professional Responsibilities

- 19. The teacher maintains accurate, complete records of student assignments and learning and of non-instructional activities.
- 20. The teacher frequently and successfully provides instructional information and student progress information to parents and engages families in the school program.
- 21. The teacher is supportive of and cooperative with colleagues and volunteers and makes substantial contributions to school and district projects.
- 22. The teacher actively seeks professional development to enhance content and pedagogical skills and actively assists other educators.
- 23. The teacher proactively serves all students, challenges negative attitudes, and takes a leadership role in high quality decision-making..
- 24. The teacher understands and actively participates in the school's School Improvement process.

These Competencies will be important in determining a focus for the Observation of the Candidate process for the Mentor, the School Administrator, the System Coordinator, the RESA Coordinator, and all other Candidate Support Team Members.

Assessment of GaTAPP Effectiveness:

The assessment of the overall and long-range effectiveness of Middle Georgia RESA's GaTAPP--- its design and its implementation --- is ongoing. The program will be assessed using the following sources of data aligned with professional standards, state standards, and agency standards. This information will be utilized by Middle Georgia RESA to revise and improve the GATAPP program which will in turn meet the needs of the TAPP Candidate.

<p>Candidate Proficiencies Aligned with Professional and State Standards</p> <p>The professional education unit’s conceptual framework provides the context for developing and assessing candidate proficiencies based on professional, state, and institution/agency standards.</p>	<p>Evidence</p> <p>GACE Score (State)</p> <p>Portfolio Completion (Agency)</p> <p>24 Competencies (State)</p> <p>System GTOI Evaluations (Professional)</p> <p>Dispositions Checklist (Agency, Professionalism)</p>
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The program design for the GaTAPP Program provides for collaboration with institutions of higher learning for such components as course work, reviews of candidate qualifications, assessments of transcripts, and monitoring and assessing the candidate’s progress in the field experience, to include possible formal classroom observations and feedback.

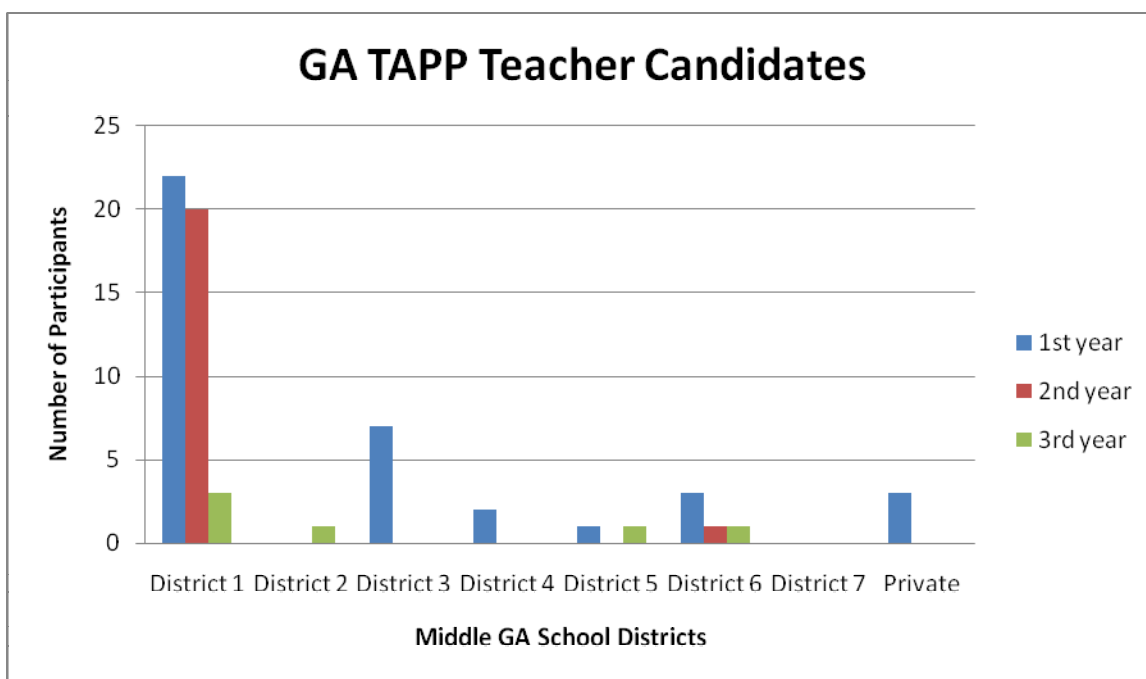
In addition, other collaboration, such as with community agencies and businesses in the community, is encouraged and, in fact, would enrich the field experience.

Note: Moore, J. (2009). *Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy Conceptual Framework*. (Original work published 2001, Davis, A.). Copyright 2009 by Middle Georgia RESA. Reprinted with permission.

APPENDIX K

THE NUMBER OF TEACHER CANDIDATES PARTICIPATING IN THE GA TAPP PROGRAM

The data represent the number of teachers who are participating in the GA TAPP program provided by the Middle Georgia RESA. The first year teachers are the teachers who just started this year, 2010. The second year teachers would have started last year, but are continuing in the program. The third year teachers are those still in the program for their third year that started 3 years ago. Data were divided into the seven districts located in the Middle Georgia area. In order to maintain confidentiality, the researcher labeled the District 1, District 2, District 3, District 4, District 5, District 6, and District 7. The numbers of teacher candidates will change as Middle Georgia RESA program providers accept more teacher candidates. This data are imperative to establish how many people participate in Middle Georgia RESA's GA TAPP program at the time of the study.



Note: Information was developed according to personal communication with M. Smith, Administrative Assistant, Middle Georgia RESA on July 28, 2010.